

92 GS/Adm-02/En

Original: English

April 2025

**DIRECTOR GENERAL'S REPORT  
ON 2024 WOAHA ACTIVITIES**

*Administrative Working Document*



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# FOREWORD

The year 2024 will long be remembered as the centenary of WOAAH, an organisation founded in 1924 as the Office International des Epizooties.

During the year, thanks to our committed and competent teams and a remarkable network of expertise, we continued to serve our Members within the framework of our mandate, strengthened our presence on the international political scene and, at the same time, initiated work that will shape the future of WOAAH.

## ***Our activities***

In 2024, the teams, supported by all the experts who back them up, worked with professionalism on the activities stemming from our mandate in terms of transparency of the global animal health situation, with 544 immediate notifications, 4795 follow-up reports, the issuing of 5 new disease-free statuses, the reconfirmation of hundreds of others and the verification of 90 self-declarations. Seventy-two international standards were adopted or revised in the fields of prevention and control of terrestrial and aquatic animal diseases, animal welfare, diagnostic methods and vaccine quality.

New guidelines have been published on a wide range of subjects, such as CAHW training, simulation exercises, combating disease risks in wildlife trade, etc.

Twelve new centres of scientific excellence were recognised, bringing to 350 the number of WOAAH Reference Centres in 48 countries.

An economic study was published (ECO-AMR) on the economic impact of antimicrobial resistance on human health.

Numerous activities were carried out to develop the capacities of our Members (in particular, 33 PVS missions). Numerous projects were carried out in the field thanks to the generosity of some of our members and our donors. Our teams in the regions have provided support for a number of concrete actions, in areas such as combatting animal diseases, supporting the structuring of Veterinary Services and improving cross-border cooperation.

## ***Our presence on the international stage***

In 2024, WOAAH continued to make its presence felt on the international stage. As soon as I arrived in August, I was asked to make the voice of WOAAH, animal health and the Veterinary Services heard in a number of international forums:

- In New York, at the United Nations General Assembly, for the political declaration on the fight against antimicrobial resistance.
- In Rio for the G20, with a particular focus on One Health.  
In Padua, Italy, for the G7 CVO meeting.
- In Jeddah for the High-Level Ministerial Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance.
- In Nouakchott for the meeting of West African agriculture ministers on pastoralism.

And we also took part in COP 29 in Azerbaijan.

WOAH continued its work on advocacy, with the publication of position papers and policy documents, and launched work on advocacy with regard to its Members. In the same spirit, I have endeavoured to reach as many public decision-makers as possible. Since taking up my post in August, I have held bilateral meetings with several ministers, including prime ministers.

### **Structural work for the future**

At the end of 2024, a number of tools were developed that will shape the future of the Organisation.

In the financial field, the budgetary framework was defined and the digital tool was deployed to secure the processes.

In the area of digital transition, numerous tools have been developed or streamlined, such as WAHIS, PVS IS, Standard Navigation Tool, etc.

In the area of HR, new recruitment procedures have introduced openness and transparency into WOA's practices, and a study has been launched into the issue of staff pensions, both at Headquarters and in the regions.

The organisational chart has been revised to better reflect the strategic direction and priorities introduced during my campaign, to remedy the imbalance between the Directorates and better integrate the Regional and Subregional Representations, and to better promote WOA's core technical missions.

Finally, at the end of 2024 we laid the foundations for two strategic projects for the coming years:

- The launch of a review of WOA's institutional, technical and financial governance. To this end, a committee of 16 WOA Members selected by the Regional Commissions will work for 3 years to put forward proposals to the Assembly.
- The drafting of the 8th Strategic Plan, the collective construction of which will take place in 2025, for adoption in May 2026.

The aim of all these initiatives is to secure our operations while developing our responsiveness and agility in the service of our Members.

To conclude, I would like to remind you that this year has also been a year of transition for the Directorate General of WOA, and I would like to pay tribute to the remarkable work carried out by my predecessor, Dr Monique Eloit, who succeeded in developing WOA and putting it on the right track for the start of this new centenary.

I would also like to thank all the teams at Headquarters and in the regions for their warm welcome.

I am aware of the responsibility I bear in having been elected by the Members to head the Organisation, and I confirm my commitment to serving them and my ambition for WOA. I will do my utmost to improve the visibility of animal health, the Veterinary Services and WOA, to strengthen support for Members and to modernise and secure the Organisation.

Emmanuelle Soubeyran

# 1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SEVENTH STRATEGIC PLAN IN 2024

## 1.1. Introduction

As part of the implementation of the Seventh Strategic Plan (7SP), WOAAH has continued its methodological approach combining the evaluation of Action Cards and High-Profile Initiatives. The year 2024 marked a transition to a more structured approach to performance management, with the gradual introduction of Organisational Key Accountability and Performance Indicators (OKAPI).

- High-Profile Initiatives (HPIs), introduced in 2022 by the Executive Committee (COMEX), have continued to play a key role in accelerating the implementation of the Strategic Plan through high-impact cross-functional projects.
- Action Cards (ACs), defined since 2021 by WOAAH's Departments and Units, have enabled the strategic objectives to be translated into operational terms, making it easier to monitor the progress made.

The evaluation of activities in 2024, focusing on deliverables (outputs), has led WOAAH to initiate a gradual change towards results-based monitoring with the introduction of OKAPIs, which will enable more rigorous measurement of the added value of the actions undertaken.

## 1.2. High-Profile Initiatives

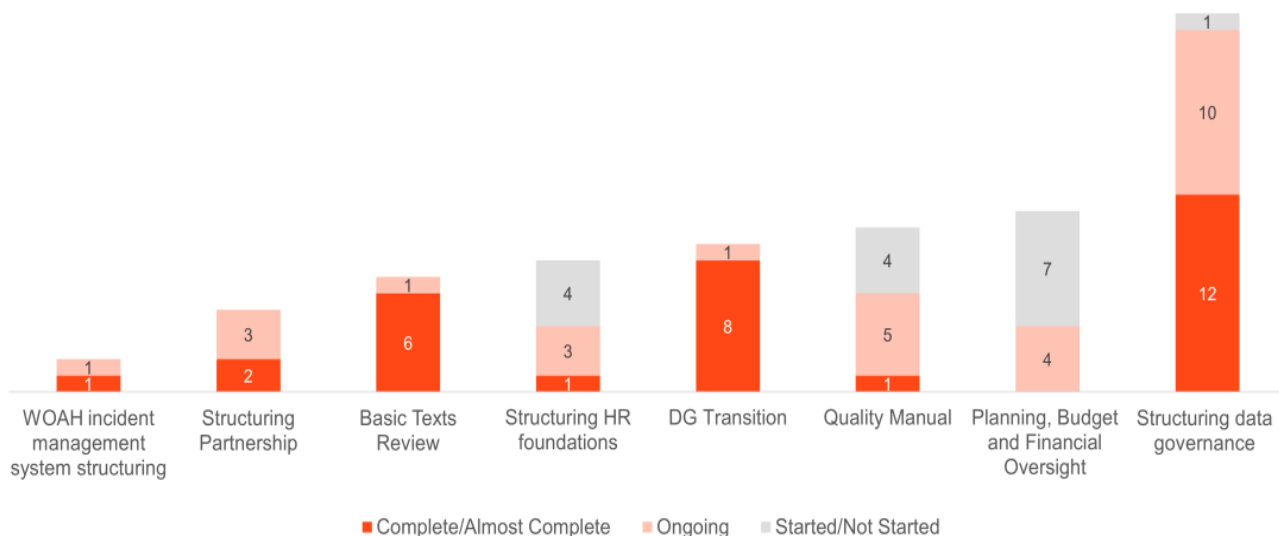
COMEX identified eight HPIs for implementation in 2024. **The majority of the year's HPIs focused on organisational efficiency and agility (Strategic Objective 5 [SO5]), with actions structuring internal governance**, and notable advances in budget structuring, the transition of the Director General and the review of WOAAH's Basic Texts. At the same time, digital transformation has been progressing with the structuring of data governance, and initiatives linked to collaboration with strategic partners are taking shape.

Table 1 shows the proportion of all HPI deliverables, by level of completion, by end of 2024:

- 41% of deliverables have been completed or are in the final phase, reflecting an acceleration in the implementation of key topics;
- 37% are in the process of being implemented, confirming a sustained work dynamic.

This result is encouraging given the complex nature of the tasks involved and the transversal nature of these initiatives. The gradual transition to OKAPIs reinforces this approach by providing a more structured and results-oriented framework, thus ensuring the continued optimisation of the actions undertaken.

Details of each of these HPIs are provided in this activity report.



**Figure 1.** Proportion of High-Profile Initiative (HPI) deliverables, by level of completion by end of 2024

### 1.3. Monitoring of Action Cards

The year 2024 confirmed the positive dynamism of the ACs, which translate the 7SP's strategic objectives into concrete activities. At the end of 2024, the majority of the ACs are either finalised or well on the way to completion, underlining the commitment of the teams and the relevance of the actions taken:

- 73% of the ACs have been completed, are nearing completion or have become standard practice ('business as usual');
- 18% of ACs are in the process of being implemented.

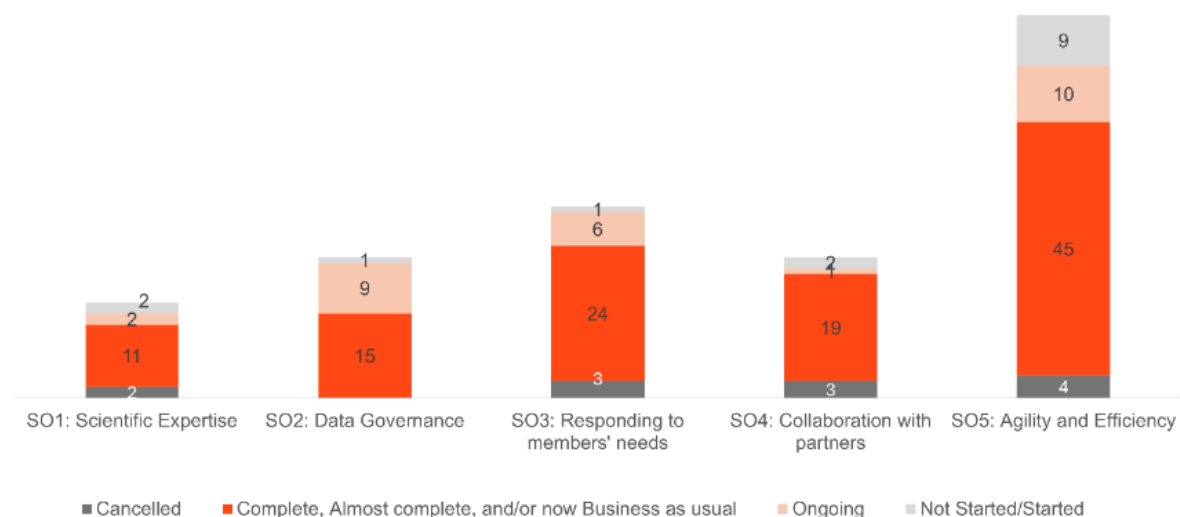
The year 2024 therefore marked a phase of consolidation and optimisation, in which the ACs continued to structure WOA's actions while evolving towards a more integrated, results-based model.

In 2024, WOA carried out several significant actions in key areas:

- As part of the strengthening of scientific expertise (SO1), the SCIENCE-2021 AC led to **the publication of a document detailing the [scientific system of WOA](#)**, available in three languages. Presented to the Specialist Commissions, this document was well received by stakeholders and was also used in the evaluation of the technical governance of the Basic Texts.
- In the field of data governance (SO2), the WAHIAD 1.1-2022 AC has made it possible to improve **the integration of WAHIS data into collaborative tools** such as GLEWS and One Health. This initiative reinforces the exploitation of WOA data on a global scale, thus facilitating better anticipation of health risks and a more effective response to crises.
- To better meet the needs of Members (SO3), WOA has launched **the Joint One Health Collaborative Learning Initiative (JOHLI)** with the FAO and WHO (CBD 12 – 2021 AC), with an action and resource mobilisation plan planned for 2025. **The analysis of the barriers to country membership** (RAD 8 – 2023 AC) resulted in reports presented to the Council and Regional Representatives, which will serve as the basis for an advocacy kit in 2025. Finally, WOA has **harmonised its normative processes** (STAN 1 – 2021 AC), reinforcing transparency in the development of standards and organising training in Africa and the Americas, with an extension planned for 2025.

- To strengthen collaboration with partners (SO4), WOH has contributed to the alignment of priorities on antimicrobial resistance in the United Nations (UN) Political Declaration (AMRVP 06 – 2021 AC). In addition, the publication of EcoAMR marks a key step forward, with new deliverables planned for 2025–2027.

The 2024 review shows that the ACs have not only produced concrete results but have also made it possible to structure sustainable approaches, integrated into the practices of WOH's Members and partners.



**Figure 2.** Number of Action Cards (ACs) by level of completion (since 2021) and by Strategic Objective

#### 1.4. Towards a new approach: the introduction of OKAPIs

The year 2024 marked a major turning point in WOH's performance management with the transition to a more structured and results-oriented approach: the Organisational Key Accountability and Performance Indicators (OKAPI). This change is part of the final phase of the 7SP and will also serve as a fundamental approach for the development of the 8th Strategic Plan (8SP)

**Twenty-three OKAPIs**, validated by COMEX in November 2024, have been developed through five internal workshops and bilateral consultations since July. They cover results indicators, each fed by a series of activities monitored through outputs related to budgetary chapters (92SG-FIN-5) and ACs/HPIs.

This new approach aims to:

- Improve performance measurement by moving from a logic of monitoring activities to an evaluation of results;
- Strengthen WOH's accountability to its stakeholders (Members, partners, staff);
- To ensure greater visibility of the actions carried out, by highlighting successes, good practices and areas for improvement;
- Identify and anticipate risks, particularly in terms of compliance and operational management.



### **Examples of OKAPIs**

- On the role of WOAAH and its international influence (SO1, SO3, SO4)
  - % of political declarations recognising the role of WOAAH in animal health and animal welfare.
- On the capacity of countries to control diseases (SO1, SO3)
  - % of Members with officially recognised status for priority diseases or benefiting from a control programme endorsed by WOAAH.
- On the impact of veterinary capacity building (SO3)
  - % of Members reporting increased investment (financial, human, infrastructure) in their Veterinary Services after participating in PVS activities.
- On data governance and access to information (SO2)
  - % of stakeholders finding WOAAH data accessible, clear and useful for decision-making (WAHIS, ANIMUSE, PVS Information System).
- On the quality of internal management and compliance (SO5)
  - % of recommendations of external audits implemented.

The OKAPIs will gradually be integrated into the monitoring and evaluation processes, with performance indicators aligned with the strategic objectives and rigorous methodologies for data collection and analysis.

With the OKAPIs, the Organisation now has a more structured, results-based framework, enabling it to better steer the end of the 7SP and effectively anticipate the development of the 8th Strategic Plan.

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## 2. OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES

### 2.1. Information management

#### 2.1.1 Animal health information

##### **World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) platform activities**

During 2024, WOAAH continued to strengthen its capacity and capability to gather important disease information from Members and non-Members through the further evolutions of the WAHIS platform by and consolidating relationships with reporting and consulting users.

During the first semester of 2024, the Six-Monthly Reporting (SMR) module was optimised, mirroring the successful approach taken for the Early Warning module. The new SMR module went live on 4 June 2024. During the same period, the Annual Reporting (AR) module was developed and was likewise released in June 2024, incorporating an Animal Population module. In a subsequent phase, the AR module will expand to include a Veterinary Capacity module and an Emergency Preparedness module once agreement for a new procurement exercise (and funding) for further WAHIS development has been reached.

In response to user feedback regarding suboptimal performance of the analytics (dashboard) module, dedicated expertise was engaged to address performance issues. Significant improvements to performance were achieved, and the Qlik software supporting the analytics section was updated in early 2024 to the latest version. These continuous enhancements underscore WOAAH's commitment to providing a robust and efficient platform for global animal health reporting and analysis.

After the successful delivery of the optimised SMR module and the new AR module in June 2024, WOAAH's focus changed to maintaining and stabilising the platform to ensure it continued to function in an optimal way. During summer 2024, the World Animal Health Information and Analysis Department (WAHIAD) team initiated a project to verify and validate a backlog of over 400 reports using the optimised SMR module. This was successfully completed at the end of September 2024. The platform performed well, and only minor issues were identified and were easily dealt with.

WOAH is now procuring future maintenance services to be contracted from 1 July 2025 and is gathering information on future development needs for WAHIS for procurement after this period of stabilisation.

##### **Support for WAHIS reporting and consulting users**

To ensure the platform's success, it is crucial that national Veterinary Services can report effortlessly, and that the data are accessible and valuable to our users' activities. Providing user support is vital for promoting the platform's value, fostering user engagement and enhancing transparency in reporting. This is why the WAHIS Support desk continues to support users on reporting and consultation. In addition to being the portal for user queries, the Support desk offers the following services: (i) one-to-one training for Focal Points on reporting; (ii) access to data extractions; (iii) demonstration sessions on how to get the best value from the data in the system; (iv) dedicated mapping extractions; and (v) updates of mapping shapefiles.

In 2024, WOAAH published three release notes informing Members of the newly launched functionalities of the public interface/analytics section, Annual Reporting module and Six-Monthly Reporting module. The release notes were shared with WAHIS reporting users (Delegates and Focal Points) globally.

Feedback provided from Delegates and Focal Points is continually taken into account to improve WOAAH's training resources.

The WAHIS and European Union (EU) Animal Disease Information System (ADIS) teams had a kiosk at the 91st General Session in 2024 during the entire week, providing updates, demonstrations and information to attendees. Separately, during the General Session, WOAHA delivered a total of 41 business discussions with 22 Members in-person during one-to-one sessions to Delegates and Focal Points from the five WOAHA Regions. The topics covered were: Early Warning reporting (16 sessions); Six-Monthly reporting (10); the WAHIS public interface, mapping and dashboards (10) and various other topics (5).

A face-to-face training session on disease notification in WAHIS and ADIS took place in Paris, France, in November 2024 for 65 Focal Points and Delegates from the WOAHA Europe Region. The training was funded by the EU and covered the interconnection between the two platforms. Further face-to-face training is planned for other Regions in 2025 and 2026. Through the training, WOAHA continued to reinforce the capacity for stewardship in disease reporting and undertook the following actions:

- updated Focal Points on disease reporting requirements and the nature of information using the WAHIS application as well as on how to appropriately consult the system;
- trained Focal Points on the latest methods for disease reporting at Member level using the WAHIS and ADIS platforms;
- confirmed Focal Points' understanding of their roles and their responsibilities to WOAHA and the EU in terms of disease reporting;
- trained Focal Points and ADIS key-users on single portal reporting through ADIS for early warning purposes to fulfil both WOAHA and EU's legal reporting requirements after interconnection.

From 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024, and excluding sessions conducted at the General Session, WOAHA delivered 151 virtual one-to-one training sessions to Delegates and Focal Points from the five WOAHA Regions. The topics covered were: Six-Monthly reporting (57 sessions); periodical Early Warning extractions (45); Early Warning reporting (16); the WAHIS public interface, mapping and dashboards (25); Annual report submission (4), Interoperability (4).

### **Interconnection with other systems and the global health community**

As indicated in the report for 2023, public interoperability remains a priority for WOAHA. This work has been transferred to a separate project (data lake project) which is now in a pilot phase and not currently within the scope for the WAHIS project.

A pilot phase was initiated in April 2024 to interconnect ADIS with WAHIS and enable one-portal reporting for early warning reports through ADIS. As of mid-January 2025, five countries were interconnected on the live platform (Denmark, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands and Spain), and further countries will interconnect in subsequent months. This has been a great achievement in reducing the reporting burden for Veterinary Services. The pilot countries have remarked that the interconnection is working well and has vastly reduced their current reporting burden.

The EU and WOAHA have highlighted that this interconnection enables more efficient reporting to WAHIS and constitutes an important milestone and proof of concept. Further information on ADIS, WAHIS and their interconnection can be found here: [Unveiling ADIS, the EU Animal Disease Information System and its link to WAHIS](#).

### **Use of WAHIS data to add value for Members**

In 2024, a WAHIS kiosk and panel discussion took place at the 31st Conference of the Regional Commission for Europe, held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan (October 2024) and at the 27th Conference of the Regional Commission for the Americas, held in Quito, Ecuador (November) to promote the value of information in WAHIS and a good understanding of the use of WAHIS for our Members, by asking the question 'WAHIS – what is in it for you?' Panel discussions highlighted the appreciation by Members of improvements and developments, and revealed meaningful discussion points to be considered by the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission in relation to WOAHA's reporting requirements contained in Chapter 1.1 of the

*Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial code)* and the *Aquatic Animal Health Code (Terrestrial code)*. The kiosk sessions enabled helpful discussions on reporting issues and the use of the data available on the public interface of WAHIS.

In addition, 13 presentations were delivered at different venues (virtual or on-site meetings) regarding the animal health situation of diseases of interest, notification requirements for WOAHA Members, and use of the WAHIS Platform.

Periodical data extractions of the validated Early Warning reports have been made available via secured SharePoint to reporting and consulting users to bridge the need for access to large amounts of data to support their risk-based decision making. Additional procedures have been implemented to ensure data quality. Sixty-one people from different organisations were given access to the weekly data extraction after attending a demonstration session by our data management team in 2024. The total number of people with access to this extraction has grown to 245 since December 2022. The data from this extraction are used by Veterinary Services, partner organisations and commercial companies to make evidence-based policy and risk decisions.

### Active search activities

WOAH monitors disease rumours through the Epidemic Intelligence from Open Sources (EIOS) system and distributes a summary digest to both internal staff and external stakeholders three times a week. This digest highlights new and emerging disease threats and alerts staff to WOAHA-listed disease outbreaks, supporting WOAHA's mission of ensuring transparency among Members. Close to 215,000 news signals were identified in 2024, and 8681 were considered relevant to WOAHA (i.e., relating to listed and emerging diseases). Of these, 455 were categorised for Immediate Notification/Follow-up Reporting (IN/FUR), 60 of which were submitted after intervention by the Active Search Team (AST), and 214 items were relevant to six-monthly reporting (i.e., listed diseases that are endemic or sufficiently stable and thus reported on a six-monthly basis). Identifying such news items supports the monitoring team with ensuring these diseases are reported in six-monthly reports and assists Members with complying with the transparency mandate of WOAHA.

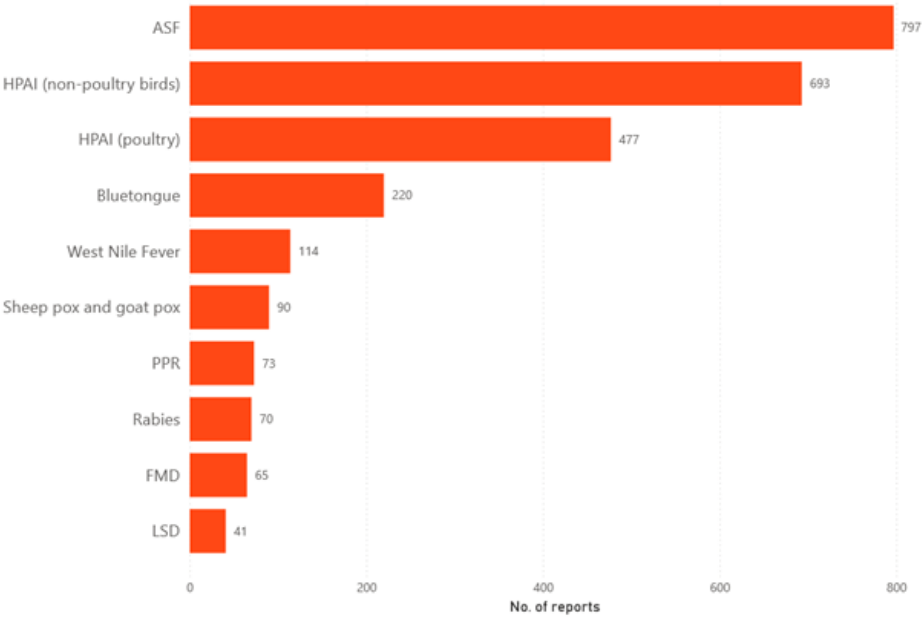
### Early warning activities

The number of immediate notifications submitted through the WAHIS Early Warning module has increased gradually but steadily, from 158 in 2013 to 544 in 2024, with 2021 being an outlier (579 immediate notifications) largely due to the outbreaks of high pathogenicity avian influenza. The number of follow-up reports with quantitative data rose from a low of 274 in 2013 to a high of 2582 in 2023, with the total of 2372 in 2024 being only slightly lower (Fig. 3). In 2024, 118 Members and non-Members provided information about 13,855 outbreaks that started in 2024, involving 66 different diseases.



**Figure 3.** Trend in submission of immediate notifications and follow-up reports, 2013–2024 (excluding follow-up reports with no change to quantitative data)

The three most reported diseases in 2024 were African swine fever, high pathogenicity avian influenza in non-poultry and wild birds, and high pathogenicity avian influenza in poultry (Fig. 4).



**Figure 4.** Top ten diseases reported through early warning reports (immediate notifications and follow-up reports) in 2024 (ASF: African swine fever; HPAI: high pathogenicity avian influenza; PPR: peste de petits ruminants; FMD: foot and mouth disease; LSD: lumpy skin disease)

**Monitoring activities**

In 2024, 799 six-monthly reports (SMRs) from 169 countries/territories were submitted, compared to 826 from 151 countries/territories in 2023. Of the SMRs submitted in 2024, 24% were for 2024 (first semester), 42% for 2023, 26% for 2020 to 2022, and the remainder (8%) were for years before 2020. Nine hundred and sixty-one SMRs were published in 2024, representing a 15% increase over the 834 published in 2023. The improved user-friendliness of the optimised SMR module combined with WAHIAD’s internal business intelligence tools and enhanced processes increased the efficiency of WAHIAD’s verification and publication of SMRs, and by the end of December, there were only 12 submitted reports that had been in the system longer than 90 days. The monitoring team is working hard to ensure that all SMRs begin the verification process within two weeks of their submission, and that they are published within a month of submission. However, achieving this target requires active cooperation and responsiveness on the part of the submitting Members and non-Members.

The monitoring team is also responsible for the verification and publication of annual report (AR) information. This new AR module collects information on an annual basis regarding animal populations from 2023 onwards (i.e. number of live animals, mean live weight, number of slaughtered animals, total meat weight of slaughtered animals and number of animal premises). This contextual information is important in risk assessment and is also transferred to WOA’s Animal Antimicrobial Use Global Database (ANIMUSE) for the calculation of their biomass. A total of 65 ARs were submitted in 2024 after the launch of the new AR module in June; all except one of these were published by the end of December 2024.

**2.1.2 Publications**

WOAH publications disseminate the Organisation’s scientific knowledge, information on its international standards and news and reports from within the Organisation and on animal health globally. Their purpose is also to maximise the reach and impact of WOA’s scientific and policy-related contributions, inform decision-making and influence the animal health research agenda, in accordance with the WOA Science System (see [Section 2.5.1.1](#)).

- Flagship publications

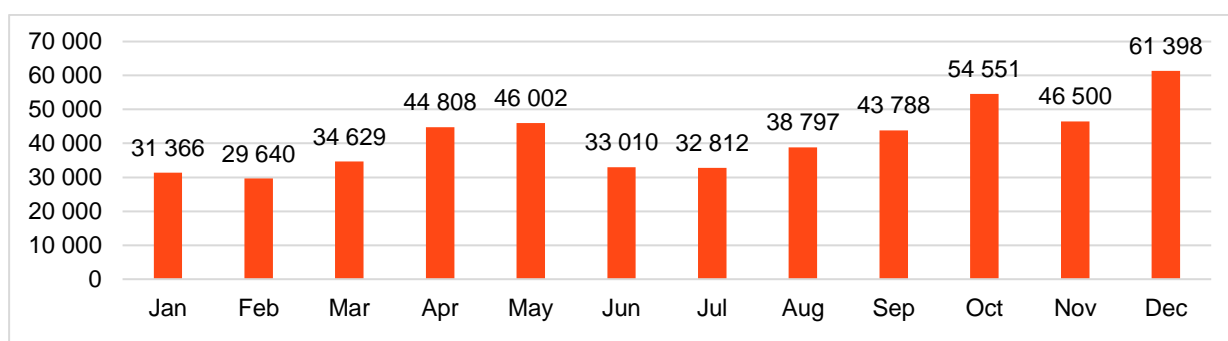
WOAH's flagship publications are the **Scientific and Technical Review**, **The Animal Echo** and **WOAH News**.

In 2024, the last issue of the *Panorama* publication was published, entitled 'Safeguarding Global Wildlife Health and Biodiversity'. Development then commenced on [The Animal Echo](#), which will publish accessible scientific articles and blog posts on themes of global interest examined through the lens of animal health. **The Animal Echo** will be hosted on a new dedicated website and will be launched in January 2025 with articles published on the theme of Gender, followed by three other topics (one topic per quarter), the next being Artificial Intelligence. In 2024, ten issues of the newsletter **WOAH News** were produced, including a special issue following the 91st General Session.

The **Scientific and Technical Review** (the *Review*), WOA's peer-reviewed journal, saw an issue on the [Global Burden of Animal Diseases](#) published in August, followed by a special Centenary edition, entitled *100 years*, published in December. The new [Editorial Board](#) for the *Review* met twice and chose topics for two subsequent issues to be published in 2025 and 2026: antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and vaccines and vaccination.

- Readership statistics for the Review and newsletter

*Review*: In 2024, WOA's Documentary Portal received 497,301 page visits for the *Review*, averaging 41,442 visits per month. December saw a peak of 61,398 visits following the publication and promotion of the special Centenary issue. All issues are [available on the Portal](#).



**Figure 5.** Page visits for the Review on WOA's Documentary Portal in 2024 (by month)

*WOAH News*: The newsletter is widely distributed, currently reaching over 14,500 recipients. Statistics show a notable average open rate of 46% compared to our peers' average of 34%. Additionally, total opens, which account for how often the newsletter is shared or reopened, range from 10,000 to 13,000 per issue.

- Ad hoc and co-publications

WOAH also produces co-publications with its Tripartite and Quadripartite partners and other publishers, as well as *ad hoc* publications prepared by WOA's teams on specific topics.

Some of the significant *ad hoc* and co-publications published in 2024:

- *Forecasting the Fallout from AMR*: three reports and a policy brief
  - [Averting the Health and Economic Impacts through One Health Policy and Investment](#)
  - [Economic Impacts of AMR in Food-Producing Animals](#)
  - [Economic Impacts of AMR in Humans](#)
  - [Human Health Impacts of AMR](#)
- [Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risks in Wildlife Trade](#)
- [Towards a Healthier Future for All: Progress in Animal Health to Contain AMR](#)

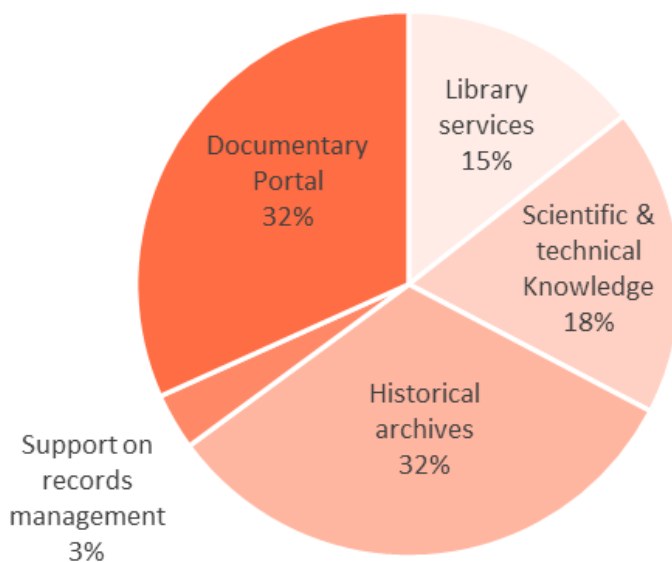


- [Addressing African Swine Fever: Protocols and Guidelines for Laboratory Diagnosis](#)
- [Guidelines for the Control of Mycobacterium Tuberculosis Complex \(MTBC\)](#)
- [Countering Disinformation and Misinformation in Animal Health Emergencies](#) (co-published with INTERPOL)
- Several One Health Policy Briefs
- [WOAH Science System](#)
- [Competency and Curriculum Guidelines for Community Animal Health Workers](#) (
- [Observatory Thematic Study: Use, Challenges and Impact of Zoning and Compartmentalisation](#) (EN, FR, ES)
- [Foresight Trendbook: Key Certainties and Uncertainties in Animal Health and Welfare](#)
  - Professionalising WOAHA's written output

In 2024, a new WOAHA Style Guide in English was rolled out to staff with a view to harmonising and professionalising all written output across the Organisation. A revised edition and companion style guides in French and Spanish will be produced in 2025.

### 2.1.3 Documentation

WOAH delivers library, knowledge and archives services to ensure dissemination, discoverability and long-term preservation of its intellectual heritage. These services aim to foster the Organisation's business continuity, accountability, transparency and scientific impact.



**Figure 6.** Breakdown by activity of the 208 requests processed in 2024

- Documentation and Archives Centre

The [Documentation and Archives Centre](#) aims to collect, reference and provide access to relevant information for internal staff, the Veterinary Services of WOAAH Members and any individual seeking information on WOAAH's activities and animal disease control in the world. In 2024, external users represented 25% of all requests processed.

During the year, activities were mainly focused on promoting historical collections by crafting knowledge products and discovery tools. Throughout the year, historical summaries were developed; some others, produced on request for WOAAH's departments and units, shed light on the background to their activities and actions. The photo collection (WOAH photos as well as photos sent in by Members over the past 100 years) were inventoried, organised and promoted internally and will be presented to the Delegates at the 92nd General Session in May 2025. In addition, WOAAH *Technical Series* and key thematic publications, such as the [History of the surveillance and control of transmissible animal diseases](#), were digitised and made available to external audiences via the Documentary Portal.

These actions contributed to feeding WOAAH's Centenary special publications – [A century of improving animal health and welfare: 100 Photos](#) and *100 years - Scientific & Technical Review Special Edition* – as well as the Communication Department's actions during the year. As a result, greater awareness and a clearer understanding of the role played by WOAAH in structuring and contributing to animal health and welfare worldwide since its creation has been observed among staff and stakeholders.

- Archives and records management

Since 2022, WOAAH has been undertaking a transversal archiving and records management project. It is crucial for WOAAH to be able to manage authentic, reliable and usable records, and to transform information governance to foster transparency and accountability. Failure to meet this challenge would result in diminished accountability and a loss of organisational and institutional memory.

The new activities taken on in the last two years include:

- Developing comprehensive preservation policies and procedures to ensure appropriate safeguarding of and access to documents throughout their lifecycle;
- Providing awareness-raising support and advisory services to WOAAH staff in their archiving and recordkeeping practices, through a community of practice, thus contributing to change management and the introduction of a positive culture of knowledge-sharing and collaboration inside the Organisation;
- Ensuring the description, preservation and accessibility of physical and digital archive holdings.

Tools and processes are being designed, including a tool to be used as the Organisation's central repository.

Taking advantage of WOAAH's Centenary, the archiving and records management project and approach were promoted throughout the year, and mini-exhibitions, quizzes and a photo contest were organised in-house to promote the historical archives. A set of historical documents retracing the history of the Organisation and various artefacts were gathered, and a slide show was realised and presented to Delegates on a dedicated stand at the 91st General Session in May 2024, which received positive feedback.

- In 2024, 67 requests relating to historical archives were processed, including 15 external requests from Members (22%), and 7 requests relating to support to WOAAH staff for their records management practices. Support is currently being provided to key WOAAH projects, such as the review of WOAAH's governance and the WOAAH Incident Management System. In addition, arrangements were made to transfer knowledge and official records to prevent any loss of data during the change of Director General.



- WOAAH Documentary Portal

The [Documentary Portal](#) is the electronic library and institutional repository of publications and documents resulting from WOAAH’s intellectual work and activities. It plays an essential role in the transparent dissemination and accessibility of knowledge for WOAAH’s stakeholders, thus enhancing the Organisation’s visibility and scientific and technical credibility. It also enables archive documents tracing the Organisation’s activities to be made available to external audiences.

The Documentary Portal contributes to the fulfilment of WOAAH’s mandate in terms of information, data and knowledge management and supports each of the Strategic Objectives (SO) of the 7th Strategic Plan, as described below:

<b>SO1 expertise</b>	<b>Scientific</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the single point of access to WOAAH’s scientific and technical output, it helps to measure its impact</li> <li>- a unique knowledge database on animal health</li> </ul>
<b>SO2 Data governance</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- contributes to WOAAH’s Open Access policy and to the transparency and accessibility of the information produced</li> <li>- follows the FAIR principles (findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable data)</li> <li>- contains data referential used to categorise information for easier retrieval and discoverability</li> </ul>
<b>SO3 Responding to Members needs</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provides unhindered access to WOAAH’s intellectual output, including its normative work and institutional bodies outputs, for easy access, use and re-use by Members and stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>SO5 Efficiency and agility</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increases the efficiency of our internal activities, reducing the time it takes to search for information and making information easily accessible internally</li> <li>- contributes to the digitisation of documentary processes</li> </ul>

The Documentary Portal received 15,264 unique visitors and a total of 110,680 visits in November 2024. During the year, 66 user requests (technical support, functional settings, indexing and cataloguing, metadata handling) were processed. This represented 32% of the overall activity of the Documentation Cell in terms of user requests.

An analysis of the results of a user survey has given rise to suggestions for improving the service and these are currently being considered.

#### 2.1.4 Data governance

- Data architecture

The development of a data architecture model has been completed and the Digital Transformation and Information Systems Department has explored the best option for WOAAH’s data architecture (the underlying technology) to create a Data Lake model (the central data repository) to share business intelligence (dashboards and reports).

A full proof of concept (a pilot project to determine suitability) has been completed utilising Microsoft Technologies; this supports WOAAH’s cloud first digital strategy and on-going investment in Microsoft technologies. The Microsoft technology selected aligns with WOAAH’s need for a data lake environment (a central data repository).

The proof of concept had detailed criteria, which included but were not limited to:

- Successful integration of at least three key WOAAH data sources;
- Effectiveness of analytical tools and report generation;
- Effective data governance, security, scalability and performance.

The technology will allow the creation of a data architecture model to enable WOHAH to manage and analyse its data with embedded data governance and security.

The Data Architecture project will commence in March 2025 and continue through 2025 and early 2026 and will enable:

- WOHAH to derive insights and value from its data;
- Provide a central repository for all WOHAH's datasets, allowing integration and connectivity between different data sets.
- General Data Governance policy

A data governance and compliance framework policy has been created and is in its final draft; part of the Data Architecture model design will include implementation of the data governance and compliance framework policy; this will allow data governance to be embedded automatically.

The data governance framework will provide a standard and consistent approach to data management. This framework will be embedded into the Microsoft technology selected as part of the data architecture testing cycle; this will reduce manual interventions, and the framework will provide details of how WOHAH collects, stores and uses its data assets.

- Master data management

Well-defined and properly managed master data are needed for all data-centred projects and activities. Master data are critical to WOHAH's operations, its digitalisation, and interoperability across datasets. Following the development of an internal Master Data policy in 2023, work on this subject continued in 2024.

- A Master Data System has been piloted in the Data Architecture

The Disease Master Data project initiated in 2023 was finalised in 2024. As of December 2024, the Disease Master Data covering listed and emerging diseases since 2005 were being documented, maintained and made available in the Master Data System, and integration with WOHAH systems, databases and dashboards/reports had already started. This was considered to be a successful pilot for WOHAH Master Data and the model is now being used to consolidate master data on other key prioritised topics.

As of December 2024, the Official Status Master Data and the country/territory Master Data were at an advanced stage of development, and the Pathogen Master Data and Species Master Data were at the ideation stage. An approach has also been defined to complete, in 2025, the Disease Master Data with the wildlife diseases not listed by WOHAH but prioritised by the Wildlife Working Group.

- Metadata

The development of best practice on metadata was initiated in 2024, based on existing international standards. These best practices will be documented and deployed within WOHAH in 2025.

- Data collection, processing and storage – focus on surveys

A survey coordination function was set up in 2024 to improve the experience of WOHAH Members and partners targeted by WOHAH surveys. The development of a framework, as well as documentation on good practice in survey design, aims to improve the management, relevance and quality of data collected via surveys, while reducing the associated burden on responding WOHAH Members. In December 2024, an information page providing lists of the past, current and up-coming surveys was piloted on the WOHAH Delegate's website. A global launch of the Survey Information Page is planned during 2025.

## 2.2. Standard setting and implementation

### 2.2.1 Overview of the standard-setting process

The four WOAHS Specialist Commissions met in February 2024, which marked the last in-person meeting of each Commission's 2021–2024 term. Elections for members of the Commissions' new term (2024–2027) were held at the 91st General Session following the 'Nomination of experts for election to a WOAHS Specialist Commission' process. Elected Commission members included 18 re-elected and six new members. Three of the Commission Presidents were re-elected and Dr Alicia Gallardo Lagno replaced Dr Ingo Ernst as the President of the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission.

The Performance Management Framework to evaluate the performance of the 2021–2024 Specialist Commissions was completed and the summary report was considered by the WOAHS Council at its May 2024 meeting, leading up to the election of experts to Specialist Commissions in May 2024. The Framework included a series of activities that were conducted throughout the term of the Commissions (i.e. September 2021 to May 2024), and included meeting reviews, meetings between Commission members and the Deputy Director General 'International Standards and Science' and the self-evaluations of the performance of members and their respective Commissions.

An induction programme for the newly elected Commissions was implemented with the objective of providing support for the re-elected and new members of the Commissions, strengthening working relationships amongst members and Commissions and briefing Commission members on key WOAHS policies and processes for the coming term. The induction programme, first implemented in 2018, has been a very successful initiative and has resulted in stronger working relationships within and amongst Commission and Secretariat staff, which contributes to quality outputs as well as new ways of working for Commissions.

The WOAHS Common Secretariat has promoted good regulatory practices for developing and reviewing our standards. It has improved coordination among Specialist Commissions, *ad hoc* Groups, and Working Groups and documented the standard-setting process. In 2024, mechanisms were consolidated to enhance transparency, coordination, and implementation of WOAHS International Standards, and to define key roles and responsibilities.

Documents developed included:

- [Process for the Elaboration of WOAHS Standards;](#)
- [Standard Operating Procedure for Members and International Organisations to submit comments](#) and [Guide for Members and International Organisations to submit comments;](#)
- Terms of Reference for Meetings of the Bureaux of WOAHS Specialist Commissions (internal document);
- Roles of Specialist Commission members in an *ad hoc* Group (internal document).

Several initiatives were implemented during 2024 with the objective of increasing Members' engagement in the standard-setting process.

Implementation of the step-wise process to improve the transparency of the WOAHS process for the elaboration of standards for better documentation and traceability of the process progressed during 2024 with a new process for the publication of comments and Commission responses and the evolution of reports of the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission, the Biological Standards Commission and the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission. In March 2024, all comments considered by the relevant Commission were published on the Delegate's website and in October 2024 all comments considered as well as the Commission responses were published on the Delegate's and the WOAHS public websites. These changes enabled improvements in the September 2024 Commission meeting reports with a focus on key activities of each Commission.

Innovation and communication

A number of established as well as new activities were conducted during 2024 with the objective of disseminating knowledge about WOAHA standards and to strengthen understanding and engagement.

The Presidents of the AAHSC, BSC and TAHSC delivered a presentation at the information webinars prior to the 2024 General Session as part of the process of engagement of WOAHA Members and partner organisations in the standard-setting process. These webinars gave participants information about the new and revised texts proposed for adoption.

Some Specialist Commission members presented updates on relevant standard-setting work undertaken by their respective Commission at regional webinars after their September 2024 meetings.

Two webinars were conducted targeting all WOAHA Members and partners to inform them about the new approach for the submission and publication of comments, including the availability for the standard operating procedure (SOP) and guidance documents. These webinars were well attended with over 50 participants and good engagement.

In-person workshops were conducted in the WOAHA regions of Africa, Europe and the Americas to engage Members in the process for the elaboration of WOAHA standards. Participants included Delegates or their representatives.

A 3-day workshop was conducted for the WOAHA Europe region on how to use the WOAHA *Terrestrial Code* to facilitate safe trade and was targeted at Veterinary Service staff involved in the context of trade.

## **2.2.2 Activities of the Specialist Commissions and Groups**

The four WOAHA Specialist Commissions oversee various activities, including the work of numerous *ad hoc* Groups, and ensure that WOAHA international standards (*Aquatic Animal Health Code* [*Aquatic Code*], *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals* [*Aquatic Manual*], *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* [*Terrestrial Code*] and *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals* [*Terrestrial Manual*]) are regularly updated and reflect current scientific evidence.

The Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission) manages the standard-setting work for the *Terrestrial Code*, while the Biological Standards Commission does so for the *Terrestrial Manual* and the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission for the *Aquatic Code* and the *Aquatic Manual*. Both the Biological Standards Commission and the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission also oversee the work of WOAHA Reference Centres. The Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases (Scientific Commission) oversees WOAHA official recognition of animal health status and provides scientific advice to other Specialist Commissions as needed.

Each Commission works closely with other Commissions and dedicated WOAHA Secretariat staff across various technical departments to fulfil their responsibilities.

### **2.2.2.1 Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission**

The Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission) held meetings in February and September 2024. The [reports](#) are available online.

During both meetings, the Code Commission contributed to WOAHA's standard-setting process by considering proposals or requests for the development of new or revised texts for the *Terrestrial Code* and responding to comments received from Members and partner organisations on texts circulated for comment, as well as other matters of relevance. As part of this standard-setting work, the Commission also considered four [ad hoc Group reports and other expert consultation reports](#). The Code Commission also liaised with the Scientific Commission, the Biological Standards Commission, the Aquatic Animals Commission, the Working Group on Antimicrobial Resistance and the Working Group on Wildlife on topics of common interest to ensure alignment of relevant work and for scientific advice, as appropriate.

Three new and 11 revised chapters, and three new and five revised glossary definitions were adopted in the *Terrestrial Code*, including:

- Chapter 1.3. Diseases, infections and infestations listed by WOA
- Chapter 1.11. Application for official recognition by WOA of free status for foot and mouth disease
- Chapter 4.6. General hygiene in semen collection and processing centres
- Chapter 4.7. Collection and processing of bovine, small ruminant and porcine semen
- Chapter 6.10. Responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in veterinary medicine
- Chapter 7.5. Slaughter of animals
- Chapter 8.8. Infection with foot and mouth disease virus
- Chapter 8.16. Infection with Rift valley fever virus
- Chapter 8.18. Infection with *Trichinella* spp.
- Chapter 13.2. Rabbit haemorrhagic disease
- Chapter 15.1. Infection with African swine fever virus
- A new Chapter 8.X. Infection with *Coxiella burnetii* (Q fever)
- A new Chapter 8.Z. Infection with *Trypanosoma evansi*
- A new Chapter 16.Z. Infection with Camel pox virus
- Glossary definitions: ‘Animal product’, ‘Biological product’, ‘Germinal products’ (new definitions); ‘Commodity’, ‘Euthanasia’, ‘Semen collection centre’, ‘Slaughter’, ‘Stunning’ (amended); ‘Death’, ‘Greaves’ (deleted)

Details of texts adopted are provided in [Resolution No. 30](#) Amendments to the *Terrestrial Code*.

All adopted amendments were published in the online version of the 2024 edition of the [Terrestrial Code](#).

### **2.2.2.2 Biological Standards Commission**

In 2024, the Biological Standards Commission (BSC) held two meetings at WOA Headquarters, in February 2024 ([BSC Feb 2024 Report](#)) and September 2024 ([BSC Sept 2024 Report](#)). During these meetings, the BSC contributed significantly to WOA’s standard-setting and scientific advisory processes. Among its key activities and achievements, the Commission:

- contributed to WOA’s standard-setting process by overseeing the update of chapters for the *Terrestrial Manual*;
- advised WOA on the appropriate use of diagnostic tests and vaccines;
- evaluated 16 applications for WOA Reference Centre status recommending nine for acceptance. All recommendations were endorsed by the WOA Council and six were adopted by the Assembly; the remaining three will be proposed for adoption in

May 2025 along with any accepted by the Commission at its February 2025 meeting;

- evaluated 18 proposed changes of Reference Centre experts, 14 of which were accepted and endorsed by the WOAHA Council;
- assessed the activities of 215 Reference Laboratories and 63 Collaborating Centres in the terrestrial animal domain to ensure compliance with their Terms of Reference (ToRs);
- discussed the enhancement of the WOAHA Standard Reagent System to improve the system, by ensuring accessibility and effectiveness;
- liaised with the Scientific Commission, the Aquatic Animals Commission and the Code Commission on topics of common interest.

Highlights of the year's activities included the following:

- revision of comments on the 13 draft chapters that had been sent for first round Member comment in October 2023, and approval of 13 for circulation for second-round comment in March 2024. The 13 chapters were presented to WOAHA Members at a pre-General Session webinar organised in April 2024. All 13 went on to be adopted at the 91st General Session in May 2024 and can be found online;
- the new review cycle (2024–2025), which began at the September 2024 meeting; 29 draft chapters were reviewed and 28 chapters were approved for first-round comment and one chapter for third-round comment; all 29 were subsequently circulated to Members in October 2024.

### **2.2.2.3 Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases**

The Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases (Scientific Commission) met in February and in September 2024. The [reports](#) are available online. During these meetings, the Scientific Commission contributed significantly to WOAHA's standard-setting, disease status recognition and scientific advisory processes. Among its key activities and achievements, the Commission:

- contributed to WOAHA's standard-setting process by providing scientific input as requested in response to comments received from Members on *Terrestrial Code* chapters and other matters as they arose;
- for *ad hoc* Groups convened by the Director General under the Commission's supervision, reviewed the ToRs for planned future *ad hoc* Groups and the reports of those that had already met;
- made assessments regarding the official animal health status of Members and worked on standards related to official status recognition;
- worked on disease control-specific issues, including (but not limited to) the development of case definitions to facilitate notification, the evaluation of diseases against the listing criteria described in Chapter 1.2. of the *Terrestrial Code* and against the Glossary definition of 'emerging disease', and provided recommendations on global disease control and eradication strategies;
- liaised with the Biological Standards Commission and the Code Commission on topics of common interest.



Highlights of the year's activities included the following:

- five *ad hoc* Group reports on the evaluation of a total of 13 applications for official recognition of animal health status and for WOAAH endorsement of official control programmes were reviewed. Of the 13 applications, five achieved official recognition by the Assembly in May 2024;
- thirty-eight annual reconfirmations for official animal health status and 12 annual reconfirmations for the endorsement of official control programmes of 2023 were comprehensively assessed;
- three applications were reviewed for the recovery of a containment zone or the suspension of a country's free status;
- the issue of certain Members with an official animal health status importing commodities from countries or zones not officially recognised as free by WOAAH for the disease in question without fully complying with the relevant provisions of the *Terrestrial Code* was further discussed. The Scientific Commission recommended that Members having an officially recognised status that are using alternative measures to those described in the disease-specific chapters should, within the next five years, provide WOAAH with the relevant documentation demonstrating that their measures meet the criteria of equivalence laid out in Chapter 5.3.;
- endorsement of a three-step plan for streamlining the annual reconfirmation process, as requested by Members, while still respecting the relevant requirements of the *Terrestrial Code* and without compromising the credibility of the WOAAH procedure;
- annual reassessment of existing emerging diseases according to the existing standard operating procedure (SOP);
- collaboration with the Code Commission on the following:
  - review of Chapters 1.6., 1.11., 11.5. on Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP) and 12.1. on African horse sickness (AHS) to ensure a common understanding of the main concerns raised by Members, the decisions made on the revised chapters and their impact on official status recognition, as well as on the adapted procedures that will be required;
  - review of the ToRs for an *ad hoc* Group on zoning to be convened to revise Chapter 4.4. Zoning and compartmentalisation and develop a new Chapter 4.Y. Application of zoning;
  - review of the recommendations and proposed draft chapter of the *ad hoc Groups* on the revision of chapters on equine encephalitides and Chapter 14.8. Scrapie;
  - review of the recommendations of the *ad hoc* Group on biosecurity for a new Chapter 4.X. Biosecurity;
  - endorsement of case definitions for Infection with Avian metapneumovirus (Turkey rhinotracheitis), Infection with *Francisella tularensis* (Tularemia) and Infection with small ruminant lentiviruses (*maedi visna* and caprine arthritis encephalitis);
  - evaluation of Infection with Nairobi sheep disease virus (Nairobi sheep disease) and Infection with *Mycobacterium avium* subsp. paratuberculosis (paratuberculosis) against the listing criteria of *Terrestrial Code* Chapter 1.2.

#### **2.2.2.4 Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission**

The Aquatic Animals Health Standards Commission (Aquatic Animals Commission) held meetings in February and September 2024. The [reports](#) are available online. During both meetings, the Aquatic Animals Commission contributed to the WOAHS standard-setting process by considering proposals or requests for the development of new or revised texts for the *Aquatic Code* and the *Aquatic Manual* and responding to comments received from Members on texts circulated for comment, as well as other matters as they arose. As part of its standard-setting work, the Commission also considered five *ad hoc* Group reports when revising relevant texts. The Aquatic Animals Commission also liaised with the Biological Standards Commission and the Code Commission on topics of common interest to ensure alignment of relevant work, as appropriate.

##### **Aquatic Code**

Twenty-eight revised chapters were adopted in the *Aquatic Code*, including:

- Chapter 1.1. Notification of disease and provision of epidemiological information
- Chapter 1.3. Diseases listed by WOAHS
- Chapter 8.1. Infection with *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*
- Chapter 8.2. Infection with *Batrachochytrium salmandrivorans*
- Chapter 8.3. Infection with *Ranavirus* species
- Chapter 9.3. Infection with decapod iridescent virus 1
- Chapter 9.4. Infection with *Hepatobacter penaei* (Necrotising hepatopancreatitis)
- Chapter 9.6. Infection with infectious myonecrosis virus
- Chapter 9.7. Infection with *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* nodavirus
- Chapter 9.8. Infection with Taura syndrome virus
- Chapter 10.1. Infection with epizootic haematopoietic necrosis virus
- Chapter 10.2. Infection with *Aphanomyces invadens* (Epizootic ulcerative syndrome)
- Chapter 10.3. Infection with *Gyrodactylus salaris*
- Chapter 10.4. Infection with infectious salmon anaemia virus
- Chapter 10.5. Infection with salmonid alphavirus
- Chapter 10.6. Infection with infectious haematopoietic necrosis virus
- Chapter 10.7. Infection with koi herpesvirus
- Chapter 10.8. Infection with red sea bream iridovirus
- Chapter 10.9. Infection with spring viraemia of carp virus
- Chapter 10.10. Infection with viral haemorrhagic septicaemia virus
- Chapter 10.11. Infection with tilapia lake virus
- Chapter 11.1. Infection with abalone herpesvirus
- Chapter 11.2. Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa*
- Chapter 11.3. Infection with *Bonamia ostreae*
- Chapter 11.4. Infection with *Marteilia refringens*
- Chapter 11.5. Infection with *Perkinsus marinus*
- Chapter 11.6. Infection with *Perkinsus olseni*
- Chapter 11.7. Infection with *Xenohaliotis californiensis*



- Model Articles X.X.5. Country free from infection with [Pathogen X] and X.X.6. Zone free from infection with [Pathogen X]

Details of texts adopted are provided in [Resolution No. 28](#) Amendments to the *Aquatic Code*.

All adopted amendments were published in the online version of the 2024 edition of the [Aquatic Code](#).

### ***Aquatic Manual:***

One new and eight revised chapters of the *Aquatic Manual* were adopted:

- Chapter 2.2.0. General information (diseases of crustaceans)
- Chapter 2.2.2. Infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (crayfish plague)
- Chapter 2.2.3. Infection with decapod iridescent virus 1 (DIV1)
- Chapter 2.2.7. Infection with *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* nodavirus (white tail disease)
- Chapter 2.2.10. Infection with yellow head virus genotype 1
- Chapter 2.4.0. General information: diseases of molluscs
- Chapter 2.4.1. Infection with abalone herpesvirus
- Chapter 2.4.4. Infection with *Marteilia refringens*

Details of texts adopted are provided in [Resolution No. 29](#) Amendments to the *Aquatic Manual*.

All adopted amendments were published in the online version of the 2024 edition of the *Aquatic Manual*.

## **2.2.2.5 Activities of the Working Groups**

### **2.2.2.5.1 Wildlife**

The Working Group on Wildlife (WGW) held two meetings in 2024. The [full reports](#) of both meetings are available online ([April meeting – November meeting](#)). Highlights from the period are described below.

Membership changes following the replacement of two of its members: Dr Koichi Murata (Retired, Japan), and Prof. Marie-Pierre Ryser-Degiorgis (Switzerland), who tragically passed away in 2023. Three new members were appointed by the Director General, after evaluation of more than 60 applications sent in response to the open call targeting the Asia and the Pacific and Europe regions and the scientific area of aquatic animal health (excluding marine mammals). Dr Anna Wong (Singapore), Prof. Dolores Gaviera-Widén (Sweden) and Dr Mwansa Mathilda Songe (Zambia) joined the WGW in November 2024.

The Working Group continued to be involved in the follow-up of the Wildlife Health Framework (2021–2025), reviewed key outcomes, made suggestions and comments for its evaluation, and will contribute to the development of the next Framework (2026–2030).

The Working Group expressed its support for the new generation of a wildlife health information system in WOA, made comments on the proposed versions of the project and encouraged WOA to move forward on the project.

The Working Group contributed to the development of Guidelines for addressing disease risks in wildlife trade, in which several WOAHA international partners were involved.

The Working group contributed to a document on good practices in wildlife health communication released on the WOAHA website. It also contributed to the finalisation of the Guidelines for addressing disease risks in wildlife trade.

In response to the situation in Europe in 2024, the Working Group considered issuing a statement on bluetongue and other *orbiviruses* in wildlife, emphasising the connection with climatic factors and offering recommendations for action. The Working Group continued to collaborate closely with WOAHA Specialist Commissions, in particular in making recommendations to better integrate wildlife health into chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*.

#### 2.2.2.5.2 Antimicrobial resistance

The Working Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMRWG) underwent key membership changes in 2024, whilst continuing the development and implementation of its work programme. The Group's work programme and the [reports](#) of its 2024 biannual meetings can be found on WOAHA's website.

Highlights from this period included:

Membership changes following the retirement of three of its members: Dr Gerard Moulin (ANSES Collaborating Centre, Europe) in November 2022, Prof Moritz van Vuuren (Africa) in December 2023, and Dr Donald Prater (Americas) in October 2024. Three new members were appointed by the Director General, after evaluation of the 54 applications sent in response to the open call targeting the Africa and America regions. Dr Arshnee Moodley (South Africa-Kenya-Denmark), Dr Jalusa Deon Kich (Brazil) and Dr Carolee Carson (Canada) joined the AMRWG in October 2024.

Recruitment of new members will continue in 2025, as two AMRWG members have announced their retirement: Dr Tomoko Ishibashi (Japan) and Dr Stephen Page (Australia). An open call targeting the Asia and the Pacific region was launched in December 2024. The new members will be appointed by the Director General and will join the AMRWG at its September/October 2025 meeting.

The revised version of *Terrestrial Code* Chapter 6.10. 'Responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in veterinary medicine', prepared by a [Subgroup of the AMRWG](#), was recommended by the Code Commission to be proposed for adoption at the General Session in May 2024, alongside other amendments to the *Terrestrial Code*. The Chapter was unanimously adopted at the 91st General Session in May 2024.

The AMRWG recommended that additional *Terrestrial Code* chapters relating to responsible use of antimicrobials be revised, prioritising [Chapter 6.8](#). 'Harmonisation of national antimicrobial resistance surveillance and monitoring programmes'. The AMRWG also recommended that the Aquatic Animals Commission urgently update relevant chapters within [Section 6 of the Aquatic Code](#).

The work of two *ad hoc* Groups for the development of Technical Reference Documents listing Antimicrobial Agents of Veterinary Importance for 1) cats and dogs and 2) bovine animal species was completed and approved by the AMRWG ([appendices 4 & 5](#) – October 2024 AMRWG meeting notes).

The recommendations section of the [WOAHA List of Antimicrobial Agents of Veterinary Importance](#) was revised following the upcoming update of the [WHO Medically Important Antimicrobials List](#) and adopted as [Resolution No. 35](#) 91st General Session in May 2024.

The AMRWG supported deployment of the specific roadmap on AMR in companion animals, based on [WOAH's AMR Strategy](#), and encouraged close synergy with the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) to avoid duplication. During the first phase of implementation (2024–2026), focused on cats and dogs, two main priorities are being targeted: to improve awareness and understanding among [companion animal veterinarians](#) and [pet owners](#) and to strengthen knowledge through surveillance activities, leading ANIMUSE to become the global reference database for both AMR and antimicrobial use (AMU) surveillance purposes in companion animals, as AMR in these species does not fall under the remit of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The AMRWG supported the four priority areas identified by WOAHA as key to close the gap in the animal health sector, following the negotiations for a [second political declaration on AMR](#), adopted during the 79th United Nations General Assembly: prioritise prevention, resource surveillance systems, implementation of effective cross-sectoral coordination, and setting of adequate funding. The AMRWG also provided input to a series of recommendations following the successful implementation of the political declaration ([appendix 3](#) – October 2024 AMRWG meeting notes). Based on these recommendations, WOAHA has developed a [digest](#) of the Political Declaration highlighting key takeaways for Veterinary Services.

### 2.2.3 Guidelines

#### Guidelines for the control of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex in livestock: Beyond test and slaughter

To support the implementation of the [Roadmap](#) for zoonotic tuberculosis (see [Section 2.4.1.5](#)), [guidelines](#) were developed to support the Members and livestock industry stakeholders in improving the control of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex (MTBC) species infection and bovine tuberculosis (bTB) especially in those regions with a high burden of bTB in animals. These guidelines focus on strategies that either serve as alternatives to or complemented the traditional testing and slaughtering approach. They are aligned with the standards outlined in the WOAHA *Terrestrial Code* and *Terrestrial Manual*, providing an integrated framework for bTB control. The primary audience for these guidelines includes risk managers, Chief Veterinary Officers, Members, and other relevant human or animal health authorities involved in the implementation and maintenance of bTB control programmes.

A webinar was organised to launch the guidelines and explain the process involved in their development. Over 200 participants attended this webinar, out of more than 300 who had registered for it. WOAHA is actively disseminating the guidelines through webinars and social media campaigns and is developing advocacy material for bovine tuberculosis.

Communication campaigns were launched to promote the guidelines, supported by tailored social media content that reached 20,906 people, with 15,265 views, 749 engagements and 84 shares. To spotlight the issue of wildlife tuberculosis, an animated video was created, achieving a significant reach of over 1 million people, with 182,642 views, 27,063 engagements and 174 shares, underscoring the strong interest in this topic. Furthermore, the July edition of the WOAHA LinkedIn newsletter, which featured bovine tuberculosis, reached 98,055 individuals and was shared 18 times. The WOAHA webpage on bovine tuberculosis recorded 59,953 views, reflecting growing public and professional attention to this pressing issue.

#### *Practical guidelines for National Procurement of Veterinary Vaccines*

Veterinary vaccines, when combined with other measures, have proven to be powerful tools in preventing, controlling and eradicating animal diseases. An effective procurement process ensures the availability of safe and effective vaccines that meet internationally recognised quality standards, delivered at the right time, in the right quantities and at a fair price.

WOAH has developed [practical guidelines](#) to support its Members in identifying and procuring quality-assured veterinary vaccines. These guidelines provide clear instructions on the necessary information regarding vaccines and manufacturers required for the procurement process. They address recurrent needs expressed by our Members and should be considered alongside other WOAHP tools and recommendations such as WOAHP standards.

#### *Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risks in Wildlife Trade*

In June 2024, the long awaited [Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risk in Wildlife Trade](#) disseminated through WOAHP internal networks and its partners networks (Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade, Wildlife Disease Association (WDA) memberships, Parties to CITES [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora]). These guidelines are filling a gap to address this issue and were welcomed by partners, including FAO and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).

Furthermore, the guidelines are being translated into Chinese by the office of the Delegate of the People's Republic of China to WOAHP and probably into Vietnamese in addition to the official WOAHP languages.

#### *General Guidelines for Surveillance of Diseases, Pathogens and Toxic Agents in Free-ranging Wildlife*

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and WOAHP have released [updated guidelines for the surveillance of diseases, pathogens, and toxic agents in free-ranging wildlife](#). These guidelines are designed for wildlife authorities and those working with wildlife, and provide a framework to better understand and mitigate the risks associated with wildlife diseases and their potential impact on human health. A first workshop to implement the guidelines is planned in Liberia in the first quarter of 2025, in collaboration with IUCN.

#### *Practical guide for authorised field responders to HPAI outbreaks in marine mammals*

This [practical guide](#) was published in February 2024. Since its emergence in 1996, high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) caused by the H5N1 subtype, has evolved into a global panzootic, impacting Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East. Beyond domestic poultry and captive birds, it now threatens wild and domestic mammals, as well as humans. Since 2021, the HPAI H5N1 clade 2.3.4.4b strain has caused significant mortality in wild birds around the world and marine mammals in South America. Though these outbreaks have been linked to few human infections of mild to severe symptoms, all H5N1 strains (and some other subtypes) should be considered to pose zoonotic risks. Thus, this virus poses a risk to animal health, public health, and biodiversity. Thus, early detection, immediate notification and timely response, along with relevant biosecurity measures, are fundamental in devising containment and prevention strategies to protect animals, humans and biodiversity.

To provide important guidance for such strategies, the current recommendations were developed. These recommendations stem from recent HPAI outbreaks in the marine mammals of South America, with potential global applicability that accounts for local conditions and differential epidemiological situations.

The guidelines were disseminated among WOAHP networks and presented as a poster during the 8th One Health Congress, held in Cape Town, South Africa, in September 2024.

## **2.2.4 Status**

### **2.2.4.1 Applications for the official recognition of animal health status**

In promoting the safe international trade of commodities through achieving official recognition of disease-free status of countries or zones or endorsement of official disease control programmes, WOAHP received 13 new applications in 2024 (Table 3). The application dossiers were evaluated during the meetings of the respective *ad hoc* Group for each disease, held between October and November 2024. According to the new BSE standards, two risk assessments from Members having official BSE risk status

were also evaluated by the BSE *ad hoc* Group at the request of the Scientific Commission. The applications and evaluation reports of the *ad hoc* Groups were forwarded to the Scientific Commission for evaluation and, where appropriate, recommendation to the Assembly for adoption at the 92nd General Session in May 2025.

**Table 1.** *Distribution of new applications received in 2024 by disease*

<b>Disease and category</b>	<b>No. of applications</b>
<b>African horse sickness</b>	
Country freedom	1
<b>Bovine spongiform encephalopathy</b>	
Negligible BSE risk zonal status	2
<b>Classical swine fever</b>	
Country freedom	1
<b>Foot and mouth disease</b>	
Zonal freedom without vaccination	2
Zonal freedom with vaccination	3
Merging of zones free with vaccination	1
Recovery of suspended status	1
Endorsement of control programme	1
<b>Dog-mediated rabies</b>	
Endorsement of control programme	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>

#### **2.2.4.2 Annual reconfirmations**

In accordance with the *Terrestrial Code* and the relevant SOP, WOAHA Members having an officially recognised animal health status or an endorsed official control programme are obliged to reconfirm the maintenance of their official status or official control programme each year during November. A total of 389 annual reconfirmations were screened by the Status Department in 2024; as in 2023, FMD represented the biggest proportion of reconfirmations (30.7%, n = 120).

The year 2024 was marked by a high proportion of late submissions (46.9%), with 183 annual reconfirmations submitted during the last four days before the deadline of 30 November.

In 2024, 279 (71.5%) annual reconfirmations were submitted on or before 30 November 2024, which represents a decrease of 8.5% in timely submissions compared to 2023. However, 90% of annual reconfirmations had been submitted by 15 December 2024. In accordance with Resolution No. 15 of the 2020 Adapted Procedure and SOP, Members having at least one official status recognised by WOAHA or an official control programme endorsed by WOAHA are reminded of the need to submit their annual reconfirmations between 1 to 30 November each year.

The Scientific Commission endorsed a three-step action plan aimed at streamlining the annual reconfirmation procedure. The analysis of the results will be discussed by the Scientific Commission at its February 2025 meeting.

### **2.2.4.3 Development of the Disease Status Management Platform**

In line with the strategic objective of WOA's 7th Strategic Plan for optimising data governance through digital transformation, WOA has continued to develop the Disease Status Management Platform (DSMP) since 2023. This centralised system facilitates the archiving, tracking, searching and submission of Members' dossiers related to the official recognition and maintenance of animal health status.

The Annual Reconfirmation component of the DSMP was first utilised during the 2023 annual reconfirmation campaign, and it was updated with new functionalities, guidance material including video tutorials and written manuals, as well as a new form for BSE to accommodate the standards that were updated in May 2023.

In 2024, to further promote the DSMP and support WOA Members with the use of the Annual Reconfirmation component of the DSMP, the Status Department organised five regional webinars for all Members with official status/endorsed control programmes.

Development is ongoing for the component on the submission of applications for official recognition of animal health status and endorsement of official control programmes, and is planned for the component on publication of self-declarations.

### **2.2.4.4 Self-declarations**

Publication of self-declarations on the WOA website provides an opportunity for Members to increase the visibility of their animal health status and the associated risk mitigation measures in place, promote the quality of their Veterinary Services and demonstrate transparency in animal disease reporting and continuous compliance with WOA standards.

From mid-2023 to mid-2024, with the aim of ensuring that the list of Members' self-declarations remained accurate and in accordance with current WOA standards, WOA reviewed all published self-declarations and, where appropriate, notified the Members concerned to submit updated versions. This process is now carried out on a yearly basis, as described in the SOP. Of the 87 self-declarations that had been identified as outdated, 52 were re-submitted by Members, while others were deactivated and removed from the website.

Due to the above-mentioned actions, the number of self-declarations submitted in 2024 increased to 90, more than double the numbers submitted in previous years (38 in 2022 and 42 in 2023). HPAI continued to be the most frequent disease for which Members wished to self-declare their freedom (26.7%, n = 24/90). The Status Department received 21 self-declarations for aquatic diseases in 2024 (compared to only one in 2023) submitted by five members. Nine self-declarations were submitted for zones (one was for an equine disease-free zone [EDFZ]) and seven were for aquatic diseases. Only one self-declaration was submitted for a compartment (HPAI).

### **2.2.5 Observatory**

In 2024, the WOA Observatory focused its efforts on refining the monitoring indicators and preparation of the second edition of the WOA Observatory Monitoring report.

The Observatory Monitoring Report presents a systematic overview of the implementation of a broad selection of WOA standards at global level. In 2024, the Observatory team in collaboration with other WOA technical departments updated the set of monitoring indicators and followed up on the recommendations made through the first monitoring report ([Annual Report 2022](#)).



The new edition of Observatory Monitoring Report will be dedicated to Trade and sanitary measures, Self-Declaration and Official Status, Movement control, Zoning & Compartmentalisation, AMU/AMR and One Health. The dashboards embedding Monitoring Indicators and factsheets for these six sections will accompany the report (publication expected in mid-2025). The Monitoring Indicators of six other sections which were included in Annual Report 2022 (PVS; Workforce; Disease detection, diagnosis and surveillance; Transparency; Emergency preparedness; and Animal Welfare) will be updated during the second half of 2025.

▪ **The thematic studies**

Thematic studies target specific topics and specific chapters or articles of WOH standards with a more in-depth analysis of implementation.

a) Use, challenges and impact of zoning

The first thematic study focuses on the use, challenges and impact of zoning. In the project's first phase, a survey was conducted to assess the use of zoning for avian influenza (AI), African swine fever (ASF) and foot and mouth disease (FMD) and to examine the associated challenges, benefits and drawbacks. This report, published in early 2024, provides a descriptive analysis of the results. The second phase is a deeper analysis of the factors favouring and impeding zone acceptance by trade partners, using supplementary data sources and methods to complement the previous recommendations on this subject.

The quality of Veterinary services ([Chapter 3.2.](#) of the *Terrestrial Code* and, more specifically, Article 3.2.2. 'Fundamental operating principles') is one of the facilitating factors identified by the analysis. The results, in relation to WOH tools that allow Members to demonstrate their transparency, namely WAHIS, the official status of zone(s), the self-declared status of zone(s) published by WOH and the published Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Evaluation Report, show the importance of transparency for zone acceptance. Trust in the certification system for animals and animal products (Chapter 3.2.) and the use standards on zoning ([Chapter 4.4.](#)) were also identified as elements facilitating zone acceptance by trade partners.

This study will be complemented by further analysis exploring the use, benefits and challenges of implementing compartmentalisation for AI. For this purpose, data will be collected from Veterinary Authorities and the private sector.

b) Animal welfare during transport by land and sea: level of implementation of WOH standards by Members' Veterinary Services

A second thematic study was launched in November 2023 to assess the level of implementation of WOH standards relating to animal welfare during transport of live animals and explore the barriers to the uptake of these standards (see [Section 2.4.3](#)). The results of the survey, which was responded to by 53% of national Focal Points for Animal Welfare, were analysed in 2024 and were presented in a factsheet; 78% and 70% of respondents reported having a regulatory framework in place covering animal welfare during transport by land and sea, respectively, with considerable variability depending on the regions, the species and the type of establishments covered.

However, the survey showed that the main requirements of the *Terrestrial Code* were not always included in regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, the responsibilities and specific requirements of actors/entities involved in transport operations were not always defined. Among the respondents reporting having a regulatory framework in place, 72% and 75% reported having a mechanism in place to enforce the regulatory requirements related to animal welfare during transport by land and sea, respectively, with again high regional discrepancies. This enforcement mechanism included both physical inspections and documentary checks, performed at various frequencies but mainly on a systematic basis.

Based on these preliminary results, the objectives of the second phase of the study will be to identify and analyse key barriers to implementing welfare standards during transport by land and sea and develop recommendations to overcome the identified barriers

### ▪ **The Observatory Digital Platform**

The WOAH Observatory has started work on the development of the Observatory Digital Platform, which will provide all Observatory deliverables in one place, including specific access based on the user's profile. It will ease users' navigation through the Observatory outcomes and indicators and will also facilitate the work of the Observatory team by giving them the ability to create and manage activities and automate processes such as publication. Finally, it will provide WOAH Members with secured access to their country's data and enable comparisons with global/regional indicator data.

In 2024, a survey and several workshops were conducted to identify and analyse the key stakeholders, user groups and their respective needs. A call for tenders was launched to select the appropriate service provider to develop the platform. The procurement procedure will be finalised in early 2025, allowing the development to start from mid-2025.

### ▪ **Engaging with Observatory stakeholders**

In 2024, the Observatory organised or participated in several events and activities that enhanced the visibility of its objectives and achievements. WOAH Members were engaged via different events involving Delegates or technical staff from the Veterinary Services (e.g. the Conferences of the Regional Commissions, a side event during the General Session and technical webinars). The Observatory also actively pursued its collaboration with key partner organisations (e.g. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], World Trade Organization (WTO), Codex, International Plant Protection Convention [IPPC]). Collaboration with Codex and the IPPC led to the joint publication of a brochure entitled 'Use and implementation of Codex, IPPC and WOAH standards: [How do the three sisters monitor the impact of their work?](#)'

### **2.2.6 Foresight**

In the context of WOAH's 100th anniversary, a Participatory Foresight Project was launched in July 2023 aimed at looking at current and emerging opportunities and challenges, anticipating how these may impact animal health and welfare many decades from now and, in so doing, asking ourselves what sort of actions could be considered.

The project successfully concluded in 2024 with the publication of a book on trends and drivers entitled [Key Certainties and Uncertainties in Animal Health and Welfare Using horizon scanning and sense-making to consider drivers of change](#)".

Comprising scenarios depicting alternative future possibilities and a playbook on the highlights of running a foresight project, this publication, the first of its kind to be published by WOAH, highlights a set of key changes that are influencing and shaping today's decisions and tomorrow's outcomes – presented as 'change cards'. Among the emerging changes presented are those that participants assessed as 'key uncertainties' during sense-making workshops for the 100th Anniversary Foresight Project. Such changes were considered 'key uncertainties' because, while their impacts might prove significantly disruptive or transformative, it is difficult to assess the probability and full range of those impacts over time. Their potential for disruption suggests that decision-makers should begin contingency planning to anticipate potential impacts and consequences, monitor their evolution and devise adaptive or mitigative actions.

## **2.3. Capacity building**

The mission statement of WOAH's capacity-building programme is to provide assessment and guidance to Members for improving the sustainable governance and management of Veterinary Services, and their leadership in animal health systems, in line with WOAH standards. To do this, we use expertise and tested methodologies through the Performance of Veterinary Services Pathway (PVS Pathway) and the WOAH Training Platform. We promote the dissemination of results by facilitating communication to and between stakeholders, including partners, donors and public, private and non-profit actors.



Sustainable capacity building is an important activity in the WOAAH Seventh Strategic Plan (2021–2026) for the improvement of animal health and welfare worldwide. Considering WOAAH's transversal functions, various capacity-building initiatives support Members in reducing inequalities in the capacities and resources of national Veterinary Services, aimed at improving the effectiveness and sustainability of global animal health and welfare, and contributing to the strengthening of global health governance. The PVS Pathway provides institutional and country-tailored services for Competent Authorities, while the WOAAH Training Platform delivers learner-centred opportunities for individuals. The two initiatives – combined and mutually supported – guarantee a simultaneous top-down and bottom-up competency-oriented approach. Twinning projects empower Members by sharing expertise in specific thematic areas. Along with these structured initiatives, WOAAH is agile in responding to emerging needs and in strengthening capabilities, including under Quadripartite commitments and within the One Health Framework. Moreover, both the PVS Pathway and the Training Platform contribute to the development of such leading WOAAH programmes as the AMR global initiatives, and the Wildlife Health, Animal Welfare, and Aquatic Animal Health Frameworks.

### 2.3.1 PVS Pathway

#### ▪ PVS Pathway Information System

The PVS Information System (PVS IS) was launched globally for WOAAH Delegates, Partners and staff in 2024, with features to view PVS Reports, see historical PVS Pathway engagement, examine the contents of PVS Evaluation Reports to explore Critical Competencies and Levels of Advancement as well as recommendations, strengths, weaknesses and findings for each report, and to view performance data and trends for the first time through dashboards. Development of the automation of PVS Pathway processes continued in 2024, as well as the digitalisation of all forms and data collection for new Evaluation-type missions, so that PVS Evaluation reports can be written fully online and data insights in dashboards will be available in real-time. Building on the launch of the PVS IS in 2024 and the development of the PVS Evaluation Database and its insights, development of the digitalised PVS Gap Analysis began and will continue in 2025.

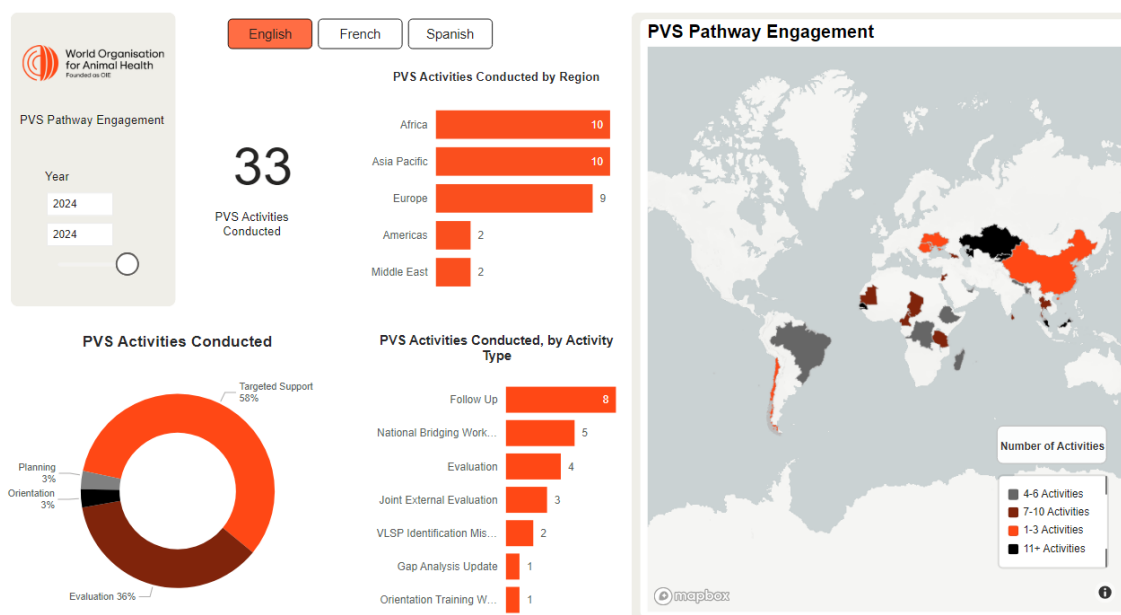
In 2024, Delegates received training on PVS IS during the Conferences of the Regional Commissions for Europe and the Americas. Members' positive experiences with PVS data housed in the PVS IS are solid evidence of why WOAAH developed the system: so that digitalisation of PVS data would lead to empowerment and greater impact and action. Failure to create attractive investment cases is a key bottleneck for the development of the Veterinary Services globally, while evidence-based investment cases are key to meeting infrastructure and service gaps. Well-resourced, transparent and accountable Veterinary Services can provide millions of people with access to key services they lack, impact their livelihoods and improve animal health and welfare. PVS data support Members in their ability to create bankable and investment-ready projects. Thirty-eight percent of WOAAH Members reported an increase in financial resources since their last PVS activity, and the success of Members in attracting investment for One Health and animal health is linked to their engagement in the PVS Pathway.

Recognition of the rich and invaluable data and insights in PVS data is growing and supports the evaluation of the impact of the PVS Pathway, notably in mobilising additional investment. For the first time, the [Pandemic Fund](#) included 16 PVS indicators on the performance of the Veterinary Services in its Results Framework for critical animal health and One Health activities benefitting WOAAH's Members. PVS was specifically mentioned as the monitoring mechanism for health system performance in ten Members across seven projects worth US\$ 140 million in 2023, with additional investments in animal health, agriculture and One Health of up to US\$ 225 million. More investment of up to US\$ 524 million in direct investment was announced in 2024. Recognition by the global community of PVS performance monitoring marks a milestone in the PVS Pathway, ensuring that its data and insights are leveraged, and actions are taken on the recommendations made for improved Veterinary Services, health and welfare and livelihoods.

▪ **PVS Pathway activities in 2024 in a nutshell**

The PVS Pathway Programme supported 37 WOAHA Members and one non-Member with 33 activities, including: 12 PVS/Follow-Up Evaluations in the Americas, Europe, Asia and the Pacific, Africa and the Middle East, three of which focused on Aquatic Animal Health Services; an Orientation Training Workshop in the People’s Republic of China; a Sub-Regional Awareness Raising Workshop on Veterinary Workforce Development for Eastern Europe conducted in Romania; two Public–Private Partnership (PPP) National Workshops in Tanzania and Ethiopia; one Veterinary Paraprofessional Curriculum Analysis mission in Cameroon; two Veterinary Legislation Support Programme (VLSP) missions in Jordan and Sri Lanka and VLSP Agreements with Fiji, Togo, Georgia and Kazakhstan. On the One Health Integration programme, five International Health Regulations – PVS National Bridging Workshops were conducted and three WHO Joint External Evaluations were supported with PVS Experts joining the teams of assessors. Many activities have started a preparation phase and will carry over from 2024 to 2025, 12 of them in the first quarter of 2025.

Security issues have conditioned the development of PVS activities in certain countries, for which flexible methodologies have been adapted, such as hosting the mission in a WOAHA regional office or adopting remote formats.



**Figure 7. PVS Pathway activities in 2024**

▪ **What’s new in PVS?**

The Capacity Building Department as technical coordinator and the Subregional Representation for Eastern Africa led the [Africa Continental Conference: Towards a more resilient veterinary workforce for Africa 2024](#). The conference, held in Kenya from 26 to 28 November, was attended by 186 participants, including representatives of national Veterinary Authorities, veterinary and veterinary paraprofessional associations, veterinary and veterinary paraprofessional education establishments, private organisations and Veterinary Statutory Bodies from 41 African Members. It included four high level panel sessions and 23 interactive and participatory sessions, with flagship events including the official launch of the Africa PPP Forum and of the WOAHA competency and curriculum guidelines for Community Animal Health Workers, and Youth perspectives on futures of the veterinary workforce. Ten conference recommendations for Members covering legislation and regulation, workforce assessment, planning and development, education, economic sustainability of Veterinary Services, gender inclusion, wellbeing and mental health, collaboration, inclusion and youth, and digitalisation were developed, as well as Flagship Recommendations for WOAHA, for the Africa PPP Forum and for the WOAHA Collaborating Centres.

The **Gender and the PVS Pathway** study analysis and outputs have offered adaptations to the PVS evidence, questions and stakeholders to include in PVS Evaluation missions.

Throughout 2024, the **Veterinary Legislation Support Programme (VLSP)** continued to develop, test and disseminate several new methodologies, with the goal of enhancing this programme's impact by tailoring its approaches to better address Members' needs. These included: the *Quadripartite One Health Legislative Assessment Tool for AMR*, the first tool to focus on legal preparedness for AMR under a One Health approach; the Wildlife questionnaire, which fosters an appropriate legal basis for the effective prevention and control of diseases both within wildlife populations and from wildlife to domestic animals and people; the methodology focused on biothreat reduction, designed to review national legislation regarding the role of Veterinary Services in the mitigation of biological threats; and new questions to assess the PPP legal framework. A new methodology to support the development of Veterinary Statutory Bodies will soon complement this set of VLSP tools.

A virtual meeting on Veterinary Legislation Review in South-East Asia was held in July. The results of a comprehensive legislation review in the region completed by the VLSP and related to animal disease control – covering transboundary animal diseases, zoonoses, wildlife diseases, as well as natural disasters and food safety – were presented to 51 participants, from 11 countries and several partners from South-East Asia and the Pacific. This review aimed to identify strengths and weaknesses of the relevant legislations in South-East Asia with regard to their compliance with WOAAH standards, and to provide recommendations at the national and regional levels. This review was also presented in April at the Virtual Information Session for the Asia and the Pacific region on Updates on WOAAH's Veterinary Workforce Development Programme and Regional Exchange on Progress and Steps Ahead.

A Comparative Study of legislation governing PPPs in the veterinary domain was also presented in a side event of the 91st General Session in May. It compared the information gathered on PPPs from the legislation reviews in Africa, South-east Asia and South Asia. This presentation will be turned into a report on legislation governing PPPs in the veterinary domain, which will be made publicly available.

The competency and curriculum guidelines for **community animal health workers (CAHWs)** were launched in October 2024, and disseminated through WOAAH Newsletters, social media posts, and webinars for WOAAH staff and external audiences. These guidelines will complement the WOAAH Guidelines on Competencies and Curricula for veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals (VPPs). The CAHW Guidelines are expected to promote consistency in the training of CAHWs and to provide Veterinary Statutory Bodies with a framework for assessing the qualifications and training of CAHWs in those cases where consideration is given to registering them. The partnership with *Vétérinaires Sans Frontières International* continues through an extension of the Cooperation Agreement for increased collaboration on CAHW integration, AMR, disease control efforts and One Health.

The **VPP curriculum analysis** missions, through continued piloting, provide clear roadmaps and recommendations for updating training curricula for VPPs delivered by educational establishments and private and public training institutions. As of December 2024, we had carried out six VPP curriculum analysis missions in Cameroon, Georgia, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal and Togo. VPP curriculum development missions, a follow up of the analysis phase, are expected throughout 2025.

**Public-Private Partnership:** The report on the PPP Targeted Support mission to [Sri Lanka](#), was delivered successfully in January. A new mission was also carried out in [Tanzania](#), from June to October 2024. Additionally, WOAAH received an official request from India for PPP Targeted Support, with the mission scheduled for implementation in February 2025.

The methodology developed for the PPP Targeted Support mission is highly flexible and adaptive, providing opportunities to address specific needs, such as those related to AMR and animal welfare in Ethiopia and Europe, respectively. In [Ethiopia](#), a PPP workshop was conducted in collaboration with WHO Ethiopia and FAO Ethiopia to enhance the implementation of the National Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance. PPP principles were also integrated into the Regional Animal Welfare Training Seminar for Europe, held in Spain, in June.

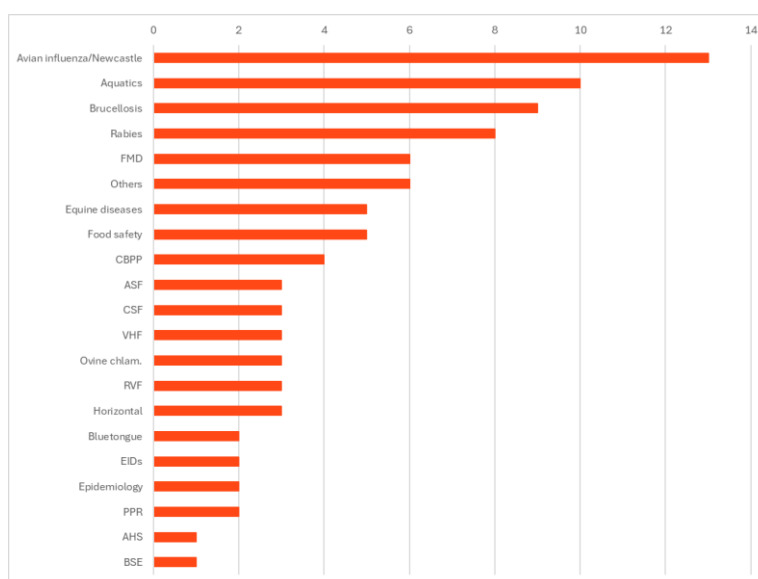
A side event during the WOAAH 91st General Session highlighted the increasing recognition of PPPs in the veterinary domain. More than 90 stakeholders from 14 countries participated, including senior government officials and prominent industry groups such as the International Dairy Federation, the International Meat Secretariat, Diagnostics for Animals, and the Gates Foundation, among others. Additionally, WOAAH introduced key tools to advance PPP efforts, including the PPP Serious Game and an eLearning module on partnerships and surveillance. These resources are set to enrich upcoming workshops and enhance capacity and stakeholder engagement in PPP initiatives globally.

WOAH and the African Union’s Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) launched the [Africa PPP Forum in the Veterinary Domain](#) to foster dialogue and sustainable practices across Africa. A hybrid consultation meeting, held in Nairobi on 4 April, initiated the forum, engaging 40 participants from regional economic communities, international organisations and industry representatives. The forum was further presented at the meeting of the Regional Commission for Africa and the PPP side event during the WOAAH General Session and inaugurated at the Africa Continental Conference on workforce development. It featured plenary and technical sessions, establishing priority areas and a roadmap to build a resilient, inclusive and sustainable veterinary ecosystem aligned with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

**Two Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) Twinning** projects, between the University of Minnesota (United States of America) and the Samarkand Veterinary Institute (Uzbekistan), and the VetAgro-Sup (France) and Ecole Inter-États des Sciences et Médecine Vétérinaires of Dakar (Senegal), were concluded.

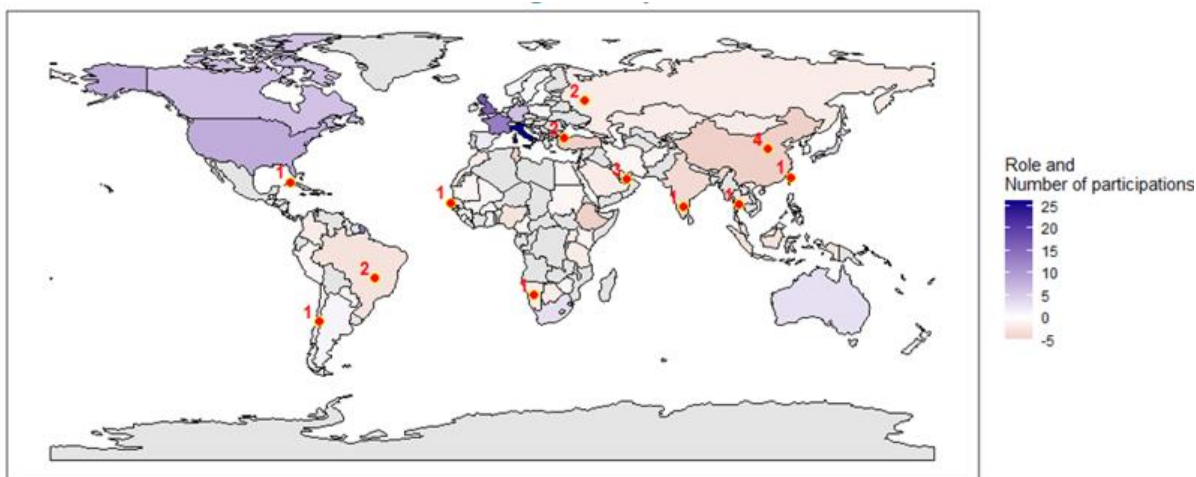
### 2.3.2 Twinning Projects

As of December 2024, 96 twinning projects had been completed since the start of the Programme, and 14 projects were underway. As a result of twinning projects, 23 institutes were designated as WOAAH Reference Laboratories or WOAAH Collaborating Centres. It is foreseen that up to eight new laboratory twinning projects will start in 2025.



**Figure 8.** Number of twinning projects per topic between 2008 and 2024

The map below shows the global distribution of laboratory twinning projects (Figure 9). The countries in shades of blue have played the role of parents, and the countries in shades of red have played the role of candidates. Darker shades indicate more projects implemented. The dots indicate the candidate countries where new WOA Reference Centres have been designated as a result of twinning projects. The number next to the dot is the number of new institutes designated per candidate country. Thus, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Chinese Taipei, Egypt, India, Namibia, Russia, Senegal, Thailand, Türkiye and United Arab Emirates have one new Reference Centre each, while People's Republic of China has five. With regard to the parents, Italy is the clear leader with 26 twinning participations. The United Kingdom and France follow, with 16 and 15 participations, respectively.



**Figure 9.** Global distribution of laboratory twinning projects including the role of the participants and the location of newly designated WOA Reference Centres.

The evaluation of the Laboratory Twinning Programme will be concluded in 2025. Its main objective is to understand whether the Programme has fulfilled its mission statement and to identify the factors associated with project success and the sustainability of twinning projects. Present and past twinning participants in the Programme were involved in the evaluation in 2024 through a survey and a series of interviews, and a workshop with focus groups. The outputs of the evaluation, which will be delivered in the second half of 2025, are a tool to monitor ongoing laboratory twinning projects, a system to evaluate project success, a new twinning guidebook and a set of recommendations for WOA to improve the Programme.

### 2.3.3 Platform for the training of Veterinary Services

In 2024, WOA made significant strides in advancing its mission to develop a modern training system, supporting its Members in strengthening Veterinary Services' capacities through workforce learning. During the year, we continued the development of the Competency-Based Training Framework. New Terms of Reference were initiated in three areas such as One Health, Trade in animals and animal products and Prudent use of antimicrobials and other veterinary products. New eModules, such as African Swine Fever in Wild Boar, Killing of Reptiles for their Skin, Outbreak Investigation and Response Management, Trade of Animal and Animal Products, Responsible use of antimicrobials in terrestrial and aquatic animals, are [online](#). Localised versions in French and Spanish are expected in early 2025. One hundred and fifty new eLearning hours are available for customisable competency-based learning pathways. Ongoing projects will lead to the production of ten additional modules on Trade, Animal Welfare and Aquatic Animal Health. Building on past achievements, we also focused on optimising and redesigning the eLearning platform. This initiative aims at ensuring the effective delivery and dissemination of training worldwide.

Our collaboration with FAO and WHO took an important leap forward in 2024 with the Joint One Health Learning Initiative (JOHLI), launched during WOA's charring of the One Health Quadripartite rotating Secretariat. This initiative is designed to develop Quadripartite joint training strategies and activities, pooling together technical, pedagogical, technological, intellectual and



financial resources, which will converge in One Health collaborative and multi-platform learning opportunities, providing easy and free access to all resources aimed at building lifelong learning for the One Health workforce based on the highest training standards.

WOAH has joined the Global Field Epidemiology Partnership (GFEP). Additionally, progress was made in advancing the Competencies for One Health Field Epidemiology (COHFE) framework. This project, funded by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) of the United States Department of Defense, which is entering its second phase, is now integrating One Health competencies into national and regional training programmes in real-world settings.

Through these efforts, WOAHA has reaffirmed its dedication to making training an integral part of responding to Members' needs. As part of these efforts, a Learning Needs Assessment information system is under development to tailor training programmes to the specific needs of Members, aligning them closely with WOAHA standards and ensuring their relevance and impact. By strengthening Veterinary Services and supporting Members in meeting international standards, WOAHA continues to demonstrate its commitment to sustainable improvements in global Veterinary Services.

### **2.3.4 Sustainable laboratories**

#### **▪ Innovation to seek solutions to improve laboratory sustainability**

With the financial support of Global Affairs Canada, WOAHA has collaborated with partners, including Chatham House, the United Kingdom's International Biosecurity Programme and WHO, to explore solutions for enhancing laboratory sustainability.

In 2024, WOAHA established a multisectoral coalition comprising key stakeholders from the health, security, development and philanthropy sectors. This coalition launched a concrete initiative aimed at fostering innovative approaches to laboratory sustainability. After years of exploring the feasibility of a Grand Challenge, including a detailed feasibility study, the consortium decided to create an innovation ecosystem. The initiative, named Biological Preparedness and Resilience through Evolution and Innovation of Laboratories (BioPrevail), was given neutral branding and supported by a dedicated website: [www.bioprevail.org](http://www.bioprevail.org). To ensure alignment among all partners, a statement of principles was developed to establish a shared understanding of BioPrevail's aims, objectives and guiding principles.

Extensive dialogue and consultation led to the identification of the Global Health Security Fund (GHSF), a Geneva-based not-for-profit organisation with substantial expertise in health innovation, as the operational partner. In 2024, GHSF conducted over 80 stakeholder interviews and initiated the formation of a community of practice.

BioPrevail was showcased at several events during the year, including at side events at the WOAHA General Session (Paris, France) and the WHO World Health Assembly (Geneva, Switzerland), the One Health Conference (Cape Town, South Africa), the Global Health Security Conference (Sydney, Australia) and the BSL4 Zoonosis Network Conference (hybrid, global).

To operationalise BioPrevail in 2025, WOAHA and GHSF plan to launch a series of sprint challenges designed to engage the innovation community in developing practical solutions for laboratory sustainability.

#### **▪ Biosafety Research Roadmap**

In 2024 a WOAHA international Technical Working Group, containing both public and animal health experts, reviewed the evidence base to support laboratory biological risk management with a view to identifying priorities for research. The outputs were published in nine peer-reviewed papers in *Applied Biosafety*.

The Technical Working Group also carried out an updated review of laboratory-acquired infections and laboratory escapes to provide insights into the causes of laboratory accidents and called for an international reporting system that is free from blame.

## 2.4. Global frameworks

### 2.4.1 One Health

WOAH is a global leader in advancing One Health (OH), leveraging transformative initiatives, strategic partnerships and innovative tools to tackle interconnected health challenges at the human–animal–environment interface, including zoonotic threats and pandemic risks. WOAHO fosters dialogue with its Members and aligns with global frameworks such as the OH JPA. Through impactful initiatives and high-level advocacy at high level political platforms WOAHO solidifies its leadership in policy, advocacy and science for OH globally. In 2024, this included active contributions to the G20 and G7 forums, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly and the Conference of the Parties (COP) for biodiversity and for climate change.

#### 2.4.1.1 Strategic global context

[WOAH One Health strategy](#) aims to enhance the animal health sector’s role in preventing, predicting, detecting and responding to health threats, and improving the health of animals, humans and ecosystems. Its goals include promoting animal health to benefit human and environmental health and reducing health risks at the human–animal–environment interface through a collaborative OH approach.

To achieve this, WOAHO focuses on four medium-term outcomes: (i) building advocacy, political support, and investment for an evidence-based OH approach, (ii) improving coordination, communication and capacity-building in OH activities, (iii) strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration for inclusive OH strategies, and (iv) developing and spreading effective, harmonised OH tools and practices.

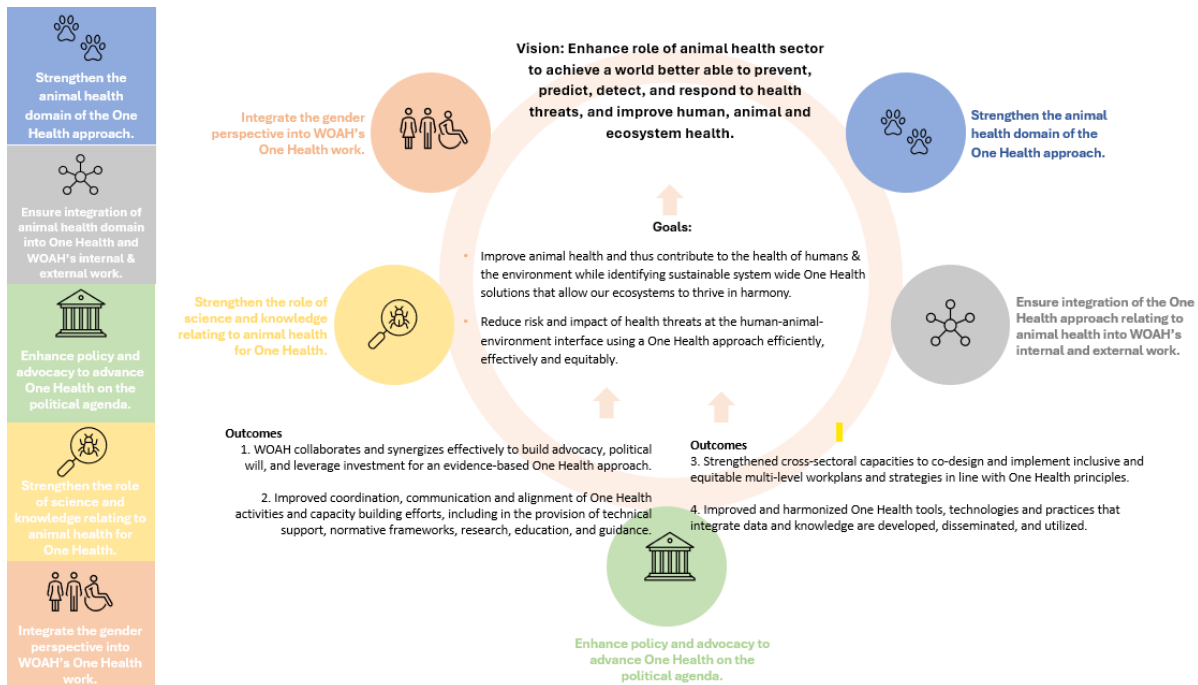


Figure 10. WOAHO One Health Strategy

## Objectives and achievements for One Health at WOAAH

### 1. Ensure integration of the animal health domain into the OH approach and into WOAAH's internal and external work

Promote the OH approach throughout WOAAH's work in areas such as AMR, vector-borne diseases, zoonotic diseases, emerging and neglected zoonotic diseases, wildlife health, disease intelligence and capacity building.

#### *Internal integration and coordination:*

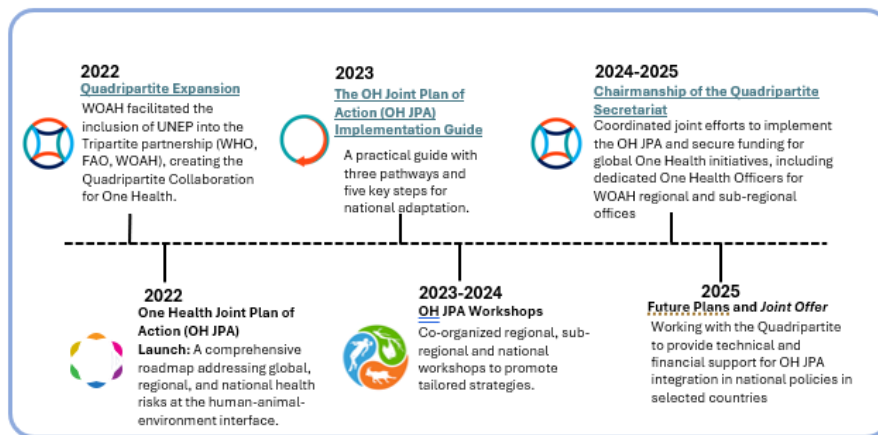
- The OH Task Force established at Headquarters and chaired by the Director General brings together departments representing the key areas of work (Capacity Building, AMR, Preparedness and Resilience, and Engagement and Investment Departments, in addition to the OH Global Coordinator and the Deputy Director General for Institutional Affairs and Regional Activities), with additional departments and staff joining as needed.
- Regular meetings of the WOAAH OH internal network, involving relevant WOAAH staff at Headquarters and at the regional and sub-regional offices.
- Regular bi-monthly meetings with regional OH officers.
- The dedicated SharePoint set up to facilitate sharing of information internally.

#### *External coordination:*

- WOAAH is a core member of the Quadripartite collaboration on OH, which is driving the change and transformation required to mitigate the impact of current and future health challenges at the human–animal–environment interface at global, regional and national levels.
- WOAAH chaired the Quadripartite rotating Secretariat between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, reiterating a strong commitment to advancing animal health efforts through several collaborative One Health initiatives around the Quadripartite's agreed four strategic priorities: (i) Political engagement and advocacy, (ii) Implementation of the One Health Joint Plan of Action (OH JPA), (iii) Science and evidence, and (iv) Leveraging investment for OH including for the Quadripartite Secretariat.
- WOAAH co-organised with its Quadripartite partners regional OH workshops, including in the Eastern Mediterranean, Asia-Pacific, Europe and Central Asia regions, and one sub-regional workshop for the Pacific Islands. At a national level, workshops were held in Bangladesh, South Africa, Cameroon, Kosovo and Mongolia. These workshops are organised to support regions and countries with adapting their strategies for OH implementation in line with the OH JPA and its implementation guide.
- WOAAH supported the establishment or strengthening of the Quadripartite Regional One Health Coordination Mechanisms in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Middle East regions. These coordination mechanisms consolidate cooperation between the regional offices of the Quadripartite to address the wide range of activities related to OH at the human-animal-environment interface. Support to set up the regional QPT coordination mechanism in the Americas region is ongoing.



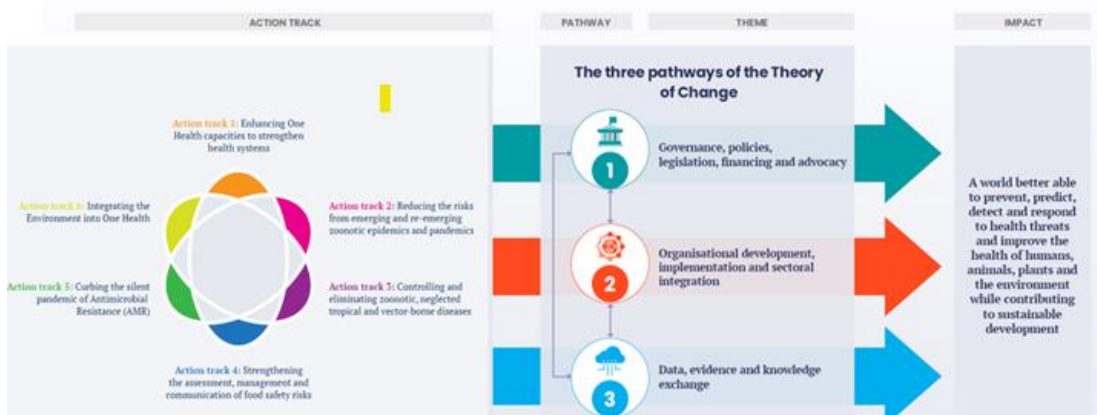
2. Strengthen the animal health domain of the One Health approach



**Figure 11.** Strengthening the animal health domain in One Health

Following the launch of the global [One Health Joint Plan of Actions](#) (OH JPA) in October 2022, which is intended to guide countries, regions and partners to work together on One Health at all levels and across sectors to tackle interconnected health risks and protect the health of all species, with the active contribution of WOAHA the [OH JPA implementation guide](#) was developed and was launched in 2023. To enhance accessibility and uptake at national level, the Guide was translated into five additional languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish. Moreover, WOAHA led the development of a concise two-page fact sheet on the OH JPA, providing countries and stakeholders with a clear and practical resource summarising the Joint Plan of Action and its implementation guide.

The OH JPA implementation guide provides countries with practical steps on how to adopt and adapt the OH JPA through the three pathways of its theory of change, illustrated in the figure below. These pathways should serve to implement all of the following OH JPA’s six Action Tracks. Each action track consists of a set of actions with specific activities with deliverables, and a timeline.



**Figure 12.** OH JPA Action tracks and pathways of change

The implementation guide serves as a complementary operational addendum to the OH JPA, translating the objectives and high-level activities described in the OH JPA into national level contexts. It follows a stepwise approach, outlining five essential steps to national OH JPA implementation. These five steps centre on conducting a situation analysis, followed by the establishment or enhancement of national multisectoral OH coordination mechanisms and the development or adaption of national OH action plans. The plans should build on and leverage existing initiatives, fostering a coherent integration process with clear roles and responsibilities for stakeholder groups, with the Quadripartite providing technical support where needed.



**Figure 13.** A stepwise approach to OH JPA implementation

The guide is accompanied by two important documents developed by the OH High Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) at the request of the Quadripartite with thorough inputs from WOA: 1) the [OH tools review](#); and 2) the [OH resources list](#), arranged by pathway of change and by action track of the OH JPA.

The Quadripartite has also developed the [One Health Guidance Note for UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams](#) to incorporate the OH approach into relevant development initiatives and plans such as the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), encompassing pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, health system strengthening, animal health and welfare, agrifood systems transformation and environmental conservation.

In 2022, the Quadripartite conducted a **costing exercise for the OH JPA**, estimating a global implementation cost of US\$ 3.7 billion over five years. The costs cover global public goods, such as evidence, tools and policy frameworks, and country-specific delivery through tailored support packages based on diagnostic assessments, the budget to be adjusted to address specific country needs as implementation plans are finalised.

In 2024, the **Quadripartite Resource Mobilisation Taskforce**, in conjunction with the Secretariat, has been working to coordinate the Quadripartite’s resource mobilisation efforts and secure vital funding for One Health initiatives.

The Taskforce developed the Quadripartite Joint Offer on One Health, which is a call for targeted investment to facilitate national uptake of the OH JPA. A workshop was held in December 2024 to finalise the document to be presented at the next Quadripartite Executive Annual Meeting (QEAM), in March 2025.


The Taskforce plans to organise a roundtable with bilateral partners and another with multilateral development banks to mobilise resources for the Quadripartite Joint Offer on One Health. Additionally, the team is preparing key messages and elevator pitches to empower the Quadripartite in supporting the members of each of the four organisations to adopt the OH approach.

Meanwhile, the use of different sources of funding available to WOA for OH is underway, including the USDA APHIS[1] (USA), GIZ[2] (Germany) and ISS [3](Italy) grants to support relevant OH activities in selected countries. Other grants include United States DTRA funding support for the Quadripartite zoonotic guide and its OH operational tools, started in Oct 2024, and fund from Italy to support Action Track 3 of the JPA on neglected zoonotic and vector-borne diseases.

In 2023, WOAHA became an Observer member of the World Bank Pandemic Fund Board. However, unlike WHO and FAO, WOAHA is not an implementing entity. Discussions with these organisations and the World Bank are underway to outline WOAHA's role as a delivery partner for certain projects. As of November 2024, the [Pandemic Fund](#) had awarded two rounds of grant funding, totalling US\$ 885 million worldwide. WOAHA is encouraging Veterinary Services to collaborate with their human health and other national counterparts on proposal submissions to ensure that animal health sector perspectives and needs are adequately reflected and thus financed.

3. Enhance policy and advocacy to advance One Health on the political agenda

WOAHA has consistently advocated for One Health and the role of animal health and welfare at major global political platforms and in 2024 during WOAHA's chairmanship, the Quadripartite achieved milestones in policy advocacy:

 <p><b>Conference of the Parties (COP):</b> WOAHA's interventions at <a href="#">COP 15</a> (Biodiversity), <a href="#">COP 28</a>, and <a href="#">COP 29</a> (Climate Change) have underscored the connection between climate change, biodiversity loss, and prevention of health risks including zoonotic spillovers.</p>	 <p><b>G20 Health Group Meetings:</b> WOAHA contributions to <i>G20 Health Working Group</i> strengthened the voice of animal health within the global health policy framework. WOAHA welcome the G20 declarations on One Health.</p>	 <p><b>United Nations General Assembly:</b> WOAHA contributed to UNGA's high-level meetings and declarations highlighting One Health's role in global health and sustainable development.</p>	 <p><b>The 8th World One Health Congress (2024):</b> WOAHA was a member of the congress scientific committee, and its speakers featured in the opening ceremony, keynotes, and various sessions, including sessions co-organized by the Quadripartite.</p>	 <p><b>Pandemic Agreement negotiations:</b> WOAHA provided technical inputs to the International Negotiating Bodies and to the OH Group of Friends and provided regular briefings to its Members.</p>
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**Figure 14.** Enhancing policy and advocacy for One Health

**Political engagement**

- WOAHA actively engages with political fora such as G20, G7, Paris Peace Forum and UN General Assembly (UNGA) high-level meetings to advocate for and raise awareness of the OH approach. These efforts aim to mobilise political will, resources and partnerships for OH and the animal health sector while providing platforms to engage relevant stakeholders, including Quadripartite representation in future high-level OH-related meetings.
- In 2024, in its capacity as the Chair of the Quadripartite, WOAHA played a pivotal role in advancing the OH agenda on the global stage through its support to the adoption of the political declaration on AMR at the UNGA in September, and to the One Health high-level event at the G20 Health Ministerial meeting in Brazil in October, contributing to its Ministerial declarations. Additionally, WOAHA co-hosted and moderated two high-level OH events at COP29 on climate change in November. These efforts underscored OH as a holistic, multisectoral and science-driven approach vital for preventing future health crises and safeguarding the health of people, animals and the planet.

**Policy engagement**

- WOAHA maintains a regular dialogue and information flow to its Members through the regular update provided to the WOAHA Council and the Organisation's governing bodies. The WOAHA OH team also develops and disseminates regular briefing notes to Members to keep them updated on key OH issues and developments such as the implementation of the OH JPA, the future WHO Pandemic Agreement, and Pandemic Fund opportunities.

- WOAHA developed six policy briefs in line with OH JPA's six Action Tracks (ATs): [AT1](#): Enhancing One Health capacities to strengthen health systems; [AT2](#): Reducing the risks from emerging and re-emerging zoonotic epidemics and pandemics; [AT3](#): Controlling and eliminating zoonotic tropical and vector-borne diseases; [AT4](#): Strengthening the assessment, management and communication of food safety risks; [AT5](#): Curbing the silent pandemic of antimicrobial resistance (AMR); [AT6](#): Integrating the environment into One Health). These policy briefs were then disseminated to WOAHA Delegates, networks and partners.

### ***Advocacy on the Pandemic Agreement***

- WOAHA leads advocacy efforts on including OH in the pandemic agreement and coordinates with the OH Group of Friends, an informal group of Members' Permanent Representatives advocating for OH in Geneva. To this end, WOAHA coordinates the Quadripartite discussions on the draft text of the agreement and submits and delivers the joint statements and inputs on behalf of the Quadripartite at meetings of the WHO Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB).
- WOAHA also supports the OH Group of Friends with organising briefings for member countries.
- This work is based on the WOAHA resolution adopted by Members in 2022, recognising the importance of the Veterinary Services and, more broadly, the animal health sectors in the development of the international instrument for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response under development by WHO. WOAHA also participates as animal health subject matter expert body in the informal sessions of the INB on OH and pandemic prevention and consultations and delivers statements during its formal proceedings.
- In 2024 progress was made on the pandemic agreement during the 12th session of the INB in November, but a final resolution was postponed until the World Health Assembly in May 2025. While consensus was reached on several areas, such as research, local production and regulatory systems, key issues remain, particularly around prevention, health systems and technology transfer. Disagreements over funding, the sharing of benefits and commitments from wealthier nations continue to be the concern. Further discussions and informal sessions are planned to address these issues, with a goal to finalise the agreement in May 2025. WOAHA will continue to technically support countries until an agreement is reached.

#### ***4. Strengthen the role of science and knowledge relating to animal health for One Health***

WOAHA, in collaboration with its Quadripartite partners, has established the [One Health Knowledge Nexus](#), a global hub designed to connect Communities of Practice (CoPs) focused on advancing OH through evidence-sharing, collaboration and innovation. This initiative fosters a multidisciplinary community of professionals, researchers and practitioners committed to OH, promoting open access to resources, co-creation of knowledge, and collective learning to advance OH approaches worldwide.

One such CoP, in which WOAHA actively participates, focuses on the [Return on Investment \(ROI\) for One Health and One Health Investment Planning](#). This CoP is working to develop a standardised and practical framework for the economic evaluation of OH, aiming to assess its added value and provide compelling evidence to secure investment and endorsement from multiple sectors. Current [analysis](#) of the economic value of OH initiatives have highlighted key challenges and identified evidence gaps in the economic evaluations of OH.

WOAHA plays a key role in providing scientific expertise and knowledge support for the animal health component of the Quadripartite's operational tools. As a result of collective efforts, the Tripartite Zoonotic Guide (TZG) was released. The TZG helps countries to adopt a multisectoral OH approach to address zoonotic diseases, offering principles, best practices, and options for effective collaboration at the human-animal-environment interface. Its

operational tools (OTs) support prevention, detection and response efforts, including the [Joint Risk Assessment \(JRA\) tool](#) for cross-sectoral risk evaluation, [the Multisectoral One Health Coordination Mechanism \(MCM\) tool](#) for inter-sectoral collaboration, [the Surveillance and Information Sharing \(SIS\) tool](#) for coordinated monitoring, [the Workforce Development \(WFD\) tool](#) to build sectoral competencies, and [the Monitoring and Evaluation \(M&E\) tool](#) for evidence-based decision-making. These tools can be accessed via this link: <https://www.who.int/initiatives/tripartite-zoonosis-guide>.

Moreover, WOAHA is establishing strong partnerships with international agencies to enhance the integration of human, animal and environment health monitoring globally. For instance, as an active participant in [the European Space Agency \(ESA\) Earth Observation for Health \(EO4Health\) User Forum 2024](#), which focuses on leveraging Earth observations to address health challenges related to environmental and climate factors, WOAHA is developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with ESA to advance animal health and mitigate risks associated with zoonotic and vector-borne diseases.

### **Support for the One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP)**

WOAHA supports the duties of the joint Quadripartite technical secretariat to OHHLEP hosted by WHO, and the Panel bureau and working groups, including coordination of meetings, preparation of working papers and other reports. WOAHA thoroughly reviews all papers and recommendations arising from the Panel for the purposes of providing inputs and feedback with a view to enriching them and subsequently using them to inform the Organisation's work.

#### *Achievements of OHHLEP Term I (2021-2023):*

The first term of OHHLEP was successfully completed, with the production of key deliverables contributing to advancing One Health collaboration. These included the development of the One Health definition and principles, a review of the OH JPA, a compilation of OH tools, resources and best practices, a white paper on enhanced disease surveillance and data sharing and a paper on prevention of spillover events in the context of pandemics.

#### *Initiatives of OHHLEP Term II (2024-ongoing):*

WOAHA, in collaboration with its Quadripartite partners, established the Term II OHHLEP membership through a public call for experts, diversifying expertise to also include virologists, epidemiologists, social scientists, economists and legal experts.

The first in-person meeting of the second-term panel was held in September 2024 during the 8th World One Health Congress, fostering brainstorming and work plan development. As a result, the following deliverables were identified:

- Analysis of enablers and barriers will examine factors affecting OH implementation across the OH JPA's three pathways of change, using action track examples.
- International governance mapping will analyse international governance instruments to assess their relevance to OH implementation for specific health risks.
- A Review of OH tools against the five steps outlined in the OH JPA Implementation Guide to provide practical, country-level guidance.

### **Engagement in expert and *ad hoc* groups and scientific committees**

The WOAHA OH team actively engages in relevant WOAHA expert groups, including the Working Group on Wildlife and the *ad hoc* Group on reducing the risk of emerging and re-emerging zoonotic diseases.



## Collaborating Centres for One Health

The One Health Centre of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) has expressed interest in joining the network of Collaborating Centres as a WOAHA Collaborating Centre for One Health and initial discussions are being held to identify areas of work and proceed to the formal application process.

## 8th World One Health Congress

WOAHA, in collaboration with the Quadripartite, actively contributed to sessions at the Congress, emphasising the importance of the One Health approach to addressing global health challenges. WOAHA was a member of the Congress scientific committee, and its speakers featured in the opening ceremony, keynotes, and various sessions, including sessions co-organised by the Quadripartite. The Congress agenda featured parallel tracks addressing OH science, antimicrobial agents and resistance, and science policy interface, amongst others.

## Capacity Development

WOAHA led capacity development efforts including through the Joint One Health Learning Initiative (JOHLI). This initiative aims to strengthen knowledge, capacity and skills in animal, human, plant and environmental health sectors, aligning with the Quadripartite's OH JPA goals.

WOAHA hosted a workshop with FAO and WHO representatives in November 2024 to finalise the initiative's concept note and establish the working group of JOHLI that will oversee the development of the action plan, budget and M&E framework of the initiative to be presented at the Quadripartite Executive Annual Meeting, in March 2025.

## Communication, outreach and knowledge sharing

WOAHA communicates about OH internally and externally, including through:

- Producing materials such as key messages, video scripts, and interviews posted on the OH webpage.
- Hosting and participating in webinars dedicated to OH, such as on [championing One Health](#), and [OH governance](#), and has actively contributed to over 20 peer-reviewed publications since 2021, various scientific reports and white pages and the development of operational tools, as well as an [inventory of One Health tools](#). These contributions strengthen the scientific basis for integrated One Health actions.
- In 2024, the WOAHA One Health team at Headquarters launched the WOAHA's quarterly *One Health Newsletter* to shed light on OH initiatives at global, regional and country levels.

### 5. Integrate the gender perspective into WOAHA's One Health work

Gender is an important consideration in the OH approach to ensure a positive impact at the social and population health dimensions, given that much of the agricultural work in low- and middle-income countries is done by women, and women are particularly vulnerable to zoonotic and vector-borne diseases due to increased exposure through their occupational and family roles. To address these issues, the OH team engages with the WOAHA Gender Task Force and, externally, with groups such as the Women for One Health Network and Women in Global Health. Also, WOAHA integrated gender and equity experts into OHHLEP Term II to ensure a holistic perspective for this advisory group.



#### **2.4.1.2 Strategic OH context at regional and sub-regional level**

WOAH is continuing its efforts to enhance and strengthen **Quadripartite Regional Coordination Mechanisms**, given their important role in driving the development of pilot projects for the implementation of the OH JPA. This process involves close consultation with the regions and countries concerned. In 2024, two workshops on OH, focusing on implementation strategies and country engagement, were successfully conducted: one in the Europe region (including Central Asia) in June, one in the Pacific Islands sub-region in August. Similar workshops are planned for the remaining WOAHP regions in 2025. **At the national level**, countries are increasingly adopting the OH JPA. WOAHP and its Quadripartite partners are supporting this uptake by organising OH workshops involving national OH coordination mechanism/platforms. In 2024, Kosovo, South Africa, Mongolia and Bangladesh conducted OH workshops, while Bolivia and Cameroon completed OH situation analyses based on the OH JPA.

Coordination mechanisms have been established and are currently active in the following regions: Asia and the Pacific, Europe (including Central Asia), Eastern Mediterranean and Africa. The Americas region, is actively preparing the establishment of its coordination mechanism in 2025, using the generic terms of reference, supporting documents and the Quadripartite Memorandum of Understanding, which were circulated by the Quadripartite Secretariat to regional offices as reference tools to guide their work.

The regions also play an integral role in the Quadripartite Executive Annual Meeting (QEAM), where they showcase their achievements in OH governance, coordination mechanisms, activities, and insights from the field. Additionally, they highlight challenges in implementation, such as differences in Quadripartite geographical and geopolitical scope and the lack of alignment of OH agendas with some international partners at regional and national levels. Importantly, they share solutions to address these issues. The upcoming QEAM in March 2025, hosted by WOAHP, will actively involve regional colleagues, leveraging their expertise to ensure a comprehensive dialogue.

WOAHP's regions place strong emphasis on OH technical priorities at their Regional Conferences, engaging experts to prepare relevant reports. For instance, OH technical items have been identified as focal topics for the Regional Commission Conferences in the Europe and Central Asia and the Americas regions in 2024, with further planning underway for 2025 for the other regions.

At regional and sub-regional level, WOAHP oversees a range of impactful projects, including capacity-building initiatives such as National Bridging Workshops (NBW), Zoonotic Disease Prioritisation workshops, and training on operational tools from the Tripartite Zoonotic Guide (TZG). These tools cover Joint Risk Assessment (JRA), Multisectoral One Health Coordination Mechanisms (MCM), Surveillance and Information Sharing (SIS), Multisectoral Workforce Development (WFD), and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), ensuring a holistic approach to advancing OH implementation worldwide.

#### **2.4.1.3 Antimicrobial resistance**

A major event in 2024 was the negotiation and eventual adoption of a [second political declaration on AMR](#) by United Nations Member States during their 79th General Assembly. As reported in the Working Group on Antimicrobial Resistance section of this report, WOAHP played an important role by informing its Members of the process, as well as of the four priority areas to close the gaps in the animal health sector. These were also recognised in the [Global Leaders Group on AMR \(GLG\) recommendations](#) for consideration by UN Member States, as well as in the [urgent call from the GLG to Member States of the United Nations](#).

Negotiations started in May 2024, and the process was led by the Office of the President of the General Assembly, which appointed Ambassadors Frazier (Malta) and Jackman (Barbados) to co-facilitate writing and negotiations with Member States. The Quadripartite Joint Secretariat on AMR acted as a support entity. Consequently, WOAHA was able to directly and proactively engage with WOAHA Delegates and key stakeholders. Negotiations were overall tense, especially with regard to animal health matters, such as setting targets for reduction of antimicrobial use in animals and phasing out the use of antimicrobials as growth promoters.

The political declaration finally adopted was structured in ten sections and contained 44 commitments and four follow-up paragraphs. Four specific commitments were made within the Agriculture and Animal health section, while more than 15 other commitments related to animal health matters. Following a first level of analysis, the WOAHA Council and WOAHA's AMRWG enriched and endorsed a series of actions and recommendations for Members to be prioritised for a successful implementation of these commitments. In addition to these, another series of commitments relating to the Quadripartite Organisations were also analysed and commented. All these are available in [Annex 3 of the October 2024 meeting of the AMRWG](#). WOAHA will further engage with its Members to facilitate understanding and implementation of the various actions, and it will also remain an active party in future reporting to the President of the UN General Assembly (2026), as well as to the UN General Assembly (2029).

Another important event in 2024 was the [fourth ministerial conference on AMR](#), held in Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) in November. Focusing on the implementation of the UN political declaration and supported by the Quadripartite Joint Secretariat in its late organisation, the Conference concluded with 16 commitments being expressed in the [Jeddah Declaration](#). Strengthening key actions from the UN political declaration, it is worth highlighting the call to WOAHA, through consultation with its Members, to develop science-based global stewardship guidance, such as a veterinary equivalent of the WHO AWaRe (Access, Watch, Reserve) framework to facilitate improved guidance, targeting and measuring appropriate use of antibiotics in animals. This work had already been pre-empted by the AMRWG, as noted in the reports of its two meetings held in 2024, and will continue in 2025 with the preparation of a roadmap that will include the need to mobilise resources for successful implementation. The next ministerial conference on AMR will be hosted by Nigeria and will be held in 2026.

The year 2024 was also marked by the development and release of the most comprehensive study on the [economic impact of AMR in food-producing animals](#). Supported by the United Kingdom Department of Health and Social Care, and developed by WOAHA in collaboration with RAND Europe, Animal Industry Data (AID) and the World Bank, this report sets a landmark of important findings and recommendations to avoid the catastrophic consequences of our collective inaction to contain AMR. This report is part of a series, called [EcoAMR](#), which also include a report on the [economic impact of AMR in humans](#), as well as the most updated findings on the [human health impacts of AMR](#). All of them were developed by a larger consortium including Centre for Global Development (CGD) and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), under the global coordination of WOAHA.

If no action is taken in the animal sector, study results predict that, by 2050, the impacts of AMR on livestock could reduce global GDP by US\$ 40 billion per year. Noteworthy, the toll of AMR could amount to yearly production losses equivalent to the consumption needs of about two billion people, and a cumulative GDP loss of US\$ 953 billion. In contrast, achieving a global 30% reduction in animal antimicrobial use within five years could raise GDP in 2050 by US\$ 14 billion, in comparison to the business-as-usual forecast. Further reduction towards more optimal AMU levels within 20 years could raise GDP in 2050 by US\$ 26 billion. Interestingly, statistical analysis suggested that countries using antimicrobials for growth promotion in livestock have an estimated average of 45% higher antimicrobial use per kilogram of animal biomass than countries that do not use growth promoters. This estimate accounts for all classes of antimicrobials except ionophores. As previously reported by WOAHA, the use of antimicrobials as growth promoters is a practice that still exists among 20% of its Members, with 75% of those being in the Americas and Asia and the Pacific regions.

Scenario Modelled	Annual impacts by 2050
Regular release of new antimicrobials for humans, targeting gram-negative bacteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual GDP gain of <b>US\$ 743 billion</b></li> <li>• New antimicrobials will avert <b>10.2 million deaths</b> between 2025 and 2050</li> </ul>
Better human health care and regular release of new antimicrobials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual GDP gain of <b>US\$ 959 billion</b></li> <li>• GDP-based health benefits will be worth <b>US\$ 679 billion per year</b></li> <li>• Better health care and new antimicrobials will avert <b>100 million deaths</b> due to bacterial infections between 2025 and 2050</li> </ul>
Better human health care, including access to new antimicrobials, improved vaccination, and the elimination of unsafe WASH (Water Access, Sanitations and Hygiene)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual GDP gain of <b>US\$ 990 billion</b></li> <li>• Combined improvements will avert <b>110 million deaths</b> due to bacterial infections between 2025 and 2050</li> </ul>
A global 30% reduction in animal AMU by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual GDP gain of <b>US\$ 14 billion</b></li> </ul>
A more significant reduction in animal AMU by 2045, reaching use levels of 20 mg per kg of biomass, as tracked in the global ANIMUSE database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual GDP gain of <b>US\$ 26 billion</b></li> </ul>

The main results of the EcoAMR Report Series are summarised in a [policy brief](#), providing meaningful recommendations for effective action.

WOAH was also involved in the response to a request from the Global Leaders Group, as part of the Quadripartite Joint Secretariat, undertaking an [economic analysis to better understand the costs of AMR](#) and the associated benefits of the AMR response across different sectors. As a complement to the EcoAMR Report Series, this work informed global, regional and country action on AMR response and emphasised the need to mobilise appropriate resources.

In 2024, WOAHA continued its actions to increase AMR **awareness and understanding**. **These** included the continuous update of the [AMR web portal](#) with targeted messages and advocacy materials. In particular, specific materials targeting [companion animal veterinarians](#) and [pet owners](#) were developed and disseminated in collaboration with the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA). AMR communication materials were translated into [a dozen Asian languages](#) (Bahasa Indonesia, Burmese, Chinese, Dzongkha, Khmer, Malay, Mongolian, Nepali, Sinhala, Tamil, Thai and Vietnamese).

Antimicrobial resistance featured in WOAHA's [100th anniversary report](#) through an [interview](#) conducted with Dame Sally Davies and Prof. Scott Weese as members of the Global Leaders Group on AMR. In this piece, the experts shared their insights, thoughts and ideas for a better future. The interview published on WOAHA's website received over 80,000 visits.

A media engagement campaign was implemented to disseminate the outcomes of the EcoAMR Report Series, on the eve of the High-Level Meeting on AMR on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). The media campaign included a [press release](#) disseminated under embargo with selected media outlets, an [op-ed piece](#) signed by WOAHA's Director General and published on The Hill, a social media toolkit with messages and visuals shared with key stakeholders, as well as a social media and outreach campaign implemented in WOAHA channels which reached over 900,000 people.

In collaboration with our Quadripartite partners, several activities were implemented to engage the priority target audiences identified in past global consultations: youth, media and parliamentarians. In this connection, the Quadripartite launched, in a webinar with

over 190 participants, a toolkit to engage young people meaningfully for greater reach and impact in AMR. Also, the annual meeting of the [Quadripartite Working Group on Youth Engagement for AMR](#) was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in September 2024, to discuss activities, progress on implementation of the working plan as well as World Antimicrobial Resistance Week (WAAW) celebrations for that year. A representative from the International Veterinary Student Association (IVSA) participated in the meeting as a member of the working group, to ensure animal health perspectives were considered in the discussions. The working group is also an opportunity for WOAHA to enhance visibility of its activities among students across different disciplines, while highlighting the important contributions of the veterinary profession to addressing global health challenges. Additionally, a [toolkit for media engagement](#) was published to equip individuals, organisations and networks with tools to increase public awareness of this global health threat among policy-makers, civil society and communities. Other Quadripartite toolkits to address parliamentarians are in the pipeline and will be published in 2025.

Under the theme 'Advocate. Educate. Act now.', the WAAW [2024](#) campaign aimed at educating and advocating for immediate action. One significant piece of work released was the WOAHA publication *Towards a Healthier Future for All: [Progress in Animal Health to Contain AMR](#)*, developed with contributions from over 20 Members and key partners. This report, which was visited more than 22,000 times during WAAW, explores how the animal health sector has approached the AMR challenge in recent decades, highlighting significant successes and progress made worldwide, while emphasising the need for more action, investment and collaboration. Additionally, a series of comics using a touch of humour and absurdity were disseminated in WOAHA's social media to make the topic easy to consume and more digestible. During WAAW, over 35,000 users visited WOAHA's AMR web portal.

WOAHA has also been actively **strengthening surveillance**, with actions on both antimicrobial use in animals ([ANIMUSE](#)) and the presence of substandard and falsified veterinary products among our membership.

The results of the eighth round of AMU data collection were presented at [the 9th meeting](#) of the [Global Leaders Group on AMR](#), including the publication of [the Eighth Annual Report in May 2024](#). This also included a [press release](#) (over 250,000 website visits), a [summary factsheet](#) and the updated interactive digital report available through the ANIMUSE web interface. The Eighth round report data revealed a concerning 2% increase in antimicrobial use in animals at global level between 2019 and 2021, after several consecutive years of significant decrease. While the use in animals of antimicrobials critical to human health remained low, the use of antimicrobials for growth promotion was still reported by 20% of WOAHA's membership. Global trends become clearer with regional analysis. While Africa's rise may be attributed to improved monitoring systems, it accounted for just 10% of total animal biomass and 2% of antimicrobial use in the 81 countries analysed between 2019 and 2021. In contrast, the Americas and Asia and the Pacific, which account for much higher proportions in terms of antimicrobial use and biomass, as well as Europe, showed moderate declines after years of significant decrease. Taken together, these findings indicate a slowdown in the global downward trend observed previously. Noteworthy, limited validated quantitative data from the Middle East could not be included due to confidentiality concerns.

To support our Members in this surveillance endeavour, WOAHA developed and launched a range of [video tutorials](#) for self-training. In September 2024, WOAHA initiated a series of targeted capacity-building workshops focused on the writing and publication of a national report on antimicrobial use. Starting with eight selected English-speaking Members from the Africa region, it is expected to increase the consistently low percentage of Members using their data for decision-making, as well as releasing their data publicly through the ANIMUSE platform. This action fits with WOAHA's transparency principle, as indicated in [Chapter 6.9](#) of the *Terrestrial Code*, to allow all interested parties to assess trends, perform risk assessments and use the data for risk communication purposes.

The next steps on antimicrobial use in animals move us to continue the institutionalisation of surveillance in other regions, supporting Members in their taking ownership of data collection, analysis and reporting, as well as by the development of a future module enabling data collection, reporting and analysis by different animal species. For that purpose, a technical advisory group has been created and guides WOAAH within this development.

In parallel to ANIMUSE official submissions, WOAAH gathers in the form of an inventory, information on projects and studies from a wide range of sources – Veterinary Services, academia, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), research institutions, and others – monitoring AMU at the field level across various regions and animal species. Starting in 2024, WOAAH has made information publicly available, presenting it in the form of [an interactive dashboard of projects on AMU at field level](#). The information presented is based on contextual data submitted by diverse contributors through the [Project Information Form](#) open to everyone working in this field. It does not collect actual AMU data from the field, nor does it replace or represent the AMU data submitted by National Authorities through ANIMUSE, which is primarily based on sales and imports, but it complements all the initiatives around the globe to strengthen AMU surveillance. The inventory is not exhaustive, and WOAAH encourages submissions of relevant projects to ensure it remains a reliable and comprehensive resource for WOAAH Members and other interested stakeholders.

Still in the area of AMU data collection at field level, WOAAH continued throughout 2024 the work of an Electronic Expert Group (EEG) to develop guidelines on monitoring AMU in aquaculture at field level. The seven different experts have developed a well advanced draft, in line with WOAAH standards, compiling relevant evidence and proposing standardised methodologies and tools. Currently under revision by an additional group of external experts in the field, the final version of the guidelines is expected to be released in the second half of 2025.

Another activity that WOAAH has continued to strengthen in terms of surveillance is the setting up and testing of a global alert system to track substandard and falsified veterinary products (VSAFE pilot tool). WOAAH effectively raised awareness about the issue of falsified and substandard products and their detrimental effects on antimicrobial resistance, with special emphasis during the 1st tailored workshop conducted in Asia and the Pacific (June 2024) which significantly increased participation and commitment from Members: up to 65 WOAAH Members across all regions during 2024. This includes online reporting forms, translated into all three WOAAH official languages, as well as a SharePoint portal accessible to all participants. In 2024, WOAAH enhanced the VSAFE portal by developing two interactive dashboards, showing level of participation and number of cases reported to WOAAH through Focal Points and Regional Authorities. The dashboards provide real-time data, more useful to Members for their awareness and decision making. Information security is high-level, to avoid any disclosure of confidential and sensitive data that might jeopardise the project due to a loss of trust among Members.

During 2024, WOAAH also engaged in a call for tenders to identify a service provider to develop a fully customised online system, based on feedback recovered during the different VSAFE pilot phases, to better respond to Member needs. Functional development will start during 2025. Meanwhile, WOAAH Members interested in joining the VSAFE alert system are encouraged to contact WOAAH Headquarters for inclusion in the currently ongoing phase 3.

To complement our support to Members, an EEG has been created to develop guidelines on post-market surveillance and recommendations to follow at the most critical steps of manufacturing and distribution practices. Experts were selected and work kicked-off in July 2024. With a view to ensuring regional representation, six experts have already been included in the group, and efforts are ongoing to recruit a seventh member, representing the Middle East region, to achieve full coverage. The objective is to work on three guidance documents, two of which are expected to be released in 2025.



Regarding actions to **strengthen research linked to AMR**, WOAHA participated with Quadripartite partners in the [Global Leaders Group on AMR \(GLG\) recommendations to address the antibiotic pipeline and access crisis in human health](#), where the GLG recognised the need for research and development (R&D) and access solutions across the One Health spectrum, recommending that a future and complementary piece of work be carried out, to providing an in-depth analysis and prioritisation.

In addition, WOAHA joined the Advisory Committee of the [EU-JAMRAI-2 Joint Action](#), leading joint and coordinated action across Europe and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration among countries, institutions and sectors. The main focus of WOAHA actions will be around antimicrobial stewardship, surveillance of antimicrobial use and antimicrobial resistance, and positive behavioural change.

Actions to **support good governance and capacity building** include continuous training on specific items such as AMU, AMR and aquatic animals, surveillance and reporting of substandard and falsified veterinary medicines, as well as on the quality, management and use of veterinary products other than antimicrobials (i.e. antiparasitic drugs, vaccines, etc.). WOAHA continues its transition towards the definition of outcome-driven programmes, setting quantitative objectives to be achieved within a given time frame. This is a major step in our evolution from reporting activities to driving change and reporting performance. Deployment is moving ahead, progressively, in all regions.

For the first time, WOAHA carried out targeted capacity-building training on the writing and publication of national reports on antimicrobial use in animals. Focusing this time on English-speaking Members in the African region, eight selected Members attended this workshop. They were chosen based on their regular participation in ANIMUSE, as well as for the consistent quality of their reported data. Participants worked together on the development of a solid basis to produce an AMU national report, as well as a factsheet for policy-makers, enhancing data transparency, analysis and utilisation for decision-making. By accepting the invitation, Members committed to the development of a national report on AMU for the 92nd General Session, to be shared with their respective national multisectoral coordination mechanisms. This marks the beginning of a series of similar training exercises, in other regions of the world, aimed at increasing the effectiveness of National Action Plans and the eventual institutionalisation of AMU surveillance.

In June 2024, a first workshop promoted WOAHA's vision on how to tackle the [presence of substandard and falsified veterinary products in the Asia-Pacific Region](#), training participants on reporting to the VSAFE pilot system. A total of 60 attendees represented 24 WOAHA regional Members and key partners, namely Regional Intelligence Liaison Offices (RILO) for the World Customs Organization, Interpol, WHO, FAO, Health for Animals, Mott MacDonald and RAGNA. As a result of the workshop, Japan, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia and the Philippines joined the VSAFE system. This collaborative model will be subsequently deployed in other regions of the world, aimed at increasing awareness of the impacts and risks of substandard and falsified veterinary products in their territories, as well as enhancing local capacities and identifying key gaps and areas for improvement in the prevention, detection and response, following a One-Health approach. Workshops of this kind offer a unique opportunity to improve coordination between WOAHA Focal Points for Veterinary Products and the contact point of the Regulatory Authority responsible for veterinary products.

In 2024, a fully dedicated workshop on [AMU/AMR in aquaculture in the Asia and the Pacific](#) region was organised for the first time. A total of 55 participants, mostly Focal Points for Aquatic Animals and Focal Points for Veterinary Products, local observers, representatives of private companies, and international partners, discussed and identified barriers preventing effective reporting of AMU and supported the enhancement of National Action Plans (NAPs) for AMR, specifically incorporating the aquaculture sector. In the Americas, a webinar organised with the CASA Collaborating Centre increased awareness on AMR and public-private work in the context of aquatic animals.



In 2024, the development of [five eLearning modules](#) on the responsible use of antimicrobials in terrestrial and aquatic animals was completed. Available under competence package No. 8 (CP8), they provide a general introduction to AMR, principles of antimicrobial stewardship, as well as indications on how to build NAPs for both terrestrial and aquatic animals.

Different guidelines were developed and released during 2024: registration and use of antimicrobials in aquatic animals were developed for Eastern Africa Members and treatment guidelines were developed for poultry diseases in Ethiopia;

A significant proportion of its actions in supporting good governance and capacity building have been developed by WOAHA in its capacity as a core member of the Quadripartite on AMR, reinforcing WOAHA's position in the delivery of the Global Action Plan on AMR, within the One Health spectrum, in collaboration with our partners: FAO, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and WHO. Major highlights for the year 2024 included:

- The continued development of [AMR Multi-Partner Trust Fund \(MPTF\)](#) funded projects, at global and national level. The full [activity report for 2023](#) was published in May 2024. WOAHA's teams in conjunction with the Regional and Subregional Representations concerned have been strongly supporting Members throughout the programme since its inception. This has included activities and achievements such as:
  - the finalisation and closure of the AMR MPTF Project for Ethiopia, as well as the submission of eight concept notes from Africa for consideration after a joint Quadripartite review of the country scoping templates;
  - the operational start of the AMR MPTF Project for Tunisia, after overcoming some structural hurdles that led to administrative delays;
  - the publication of the final National Action Plan on AMR in Tajikistan for 2023–2025, including all the actions proposed by the Veterinary Services.
- The continued improvement of the Quadripartite partnership at the regional level:
  - in Africa, Quadripartite and African Union agencies on AMR revisited the joint work plan on AMR and the development of a draft proposal for the recognition of an Africa Interagency Coordination Group on AMR (AICG-AMR), as a technical group working under and reporting to the Africa Quadripartite Secretariat;
  - in the Americas, Quadripartite and Regional Organisations aligned their AMR activities and Projects through monthly coordination calls;
  - in the Middle East, a Quadripartite inter-regional coordination network was established.
- The continued implementation of a comprehensive M&E Framework for the Global Action Plan, initially published in June 2019, including a new cycle of the annual survey, known as the [Tracking AMR Country Self Assessment Survey \(Trac2's\)](#).
- The development of the [AMR Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Platform](#), as a part of the global governance structures on AMR. With more than 200 members by the end of 2024, organised in five different clusters, this collaborative coordination mechanism aims to be an inclusive, international and multi-stakeholder forum that convenes governments, UN entities and Specialised Agencies, global and regional intergovernmental organisations, international and regional financial institutions, philanthropic donors, civil society organisations and networks, academic and research organisations and private sector entities. The second plenary session took place in November 2024, including the release of the first deliverables from action groups set in 2023.

For further and more detailed information about WOAHA's activities on AMR, Members are invited to visit our Global AMR portal as well as the Regional and Subregional Representation websites: [Africa](#), the [Americas](#), [Asia and the Pacific](#), [Europe](#) and the [Middle East](#).

#### **2.4.1.4 Rabies**

WOAH plays a key role in supporting its Members in implementing dog-mediated rabies control and prevention activities, in line with the Global Strategic Plan to end human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030 ('Zero by 30').

To enhance rabies activities and coordination with our Members, 54 Members have nominated rabies point of contact to support the coordination of national and subnational rabies activities, and 40 national strategic plans are publicly accessible and can be accessed through the United Against Rabies (UAR) Partnership Map.

- WOAHA rabies vaccine bank

The WOAHA vaccine bank offers WOAHA Members access to high-quality dog rabies vaccines at a consistent, low cost. This initiative serves as a catalyst for mass dog vaccination (MDV) programmes, which are essential for effective rabies control strategies. In 2024, almost 1 million vaccine doses were delivered to five countries in Africa (Namibia, Cameroon, Guinea, Mauritania, Burkina Faso) and two countries in Asia (Indonesia and Timor Leste). Additionally, support to the emergency response continued for Timor Leste and for Indonesia regarding the rabies outbreak in West Timor. There is ongoing work to update the process for requesting vaccines and reporting vaccine use to streamline this for Members and maximise the impact of the vaccine bank.

- Oral rabies vaccines

Oral rabies vaccination (ORV) is a promising complementary tool to target free-roaming dogs and help scale up dog vaccination coverage. WOAHA continues to invite Members to consider ORV within their mass dog vaccination campaigns, and with FAO and WHO, has published 'Oral vaccination of dogs against rabies: Recommendations for field application and integration into dog rabies control programmes'. WOAHA has been supporting scientific studies in Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand and Namibia. An oral rabies vaccine for dogs has now been registered in Indonesia and by the European Medicines Agency, and WOAHA, through the UAR Forum, is continuing to explore how to support countries in integrating ORV into national strategic plans for rabies.

- Support for the development and implementation of regional and national control programmes for the elimination of dog-mediated rabies

WOAHA is committed to assisting Members with developing and implementing sustainable and One-Health-based national control programmes for the elimination of dog-mediated rabies. In 2024, this was achieved throughout the year by organising and supporting several virtual and in-person training sessions, as well as meetings with WOAHA regional offices, with the objective of improving the capacity of Veterinary Services to control dog-mediated rabies, with special emphasis on rabies diagnosis to improve rabies surveillance by Members.

In the Africa region, with the support of the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), WOAHA has been supporting the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The project on Rabies Control and Elimination (RACE) in Cameroon was officially launched by the Cameroon Authorities in 2024. The objective of the project is to augment rabies surveillance, dog vaccination and human post exposure prophylaxis in eight departments across four provinces. During the year, more than 120,000 dogs were successfully vaccinated.

Namibia made significant progress in rabies elimination efforts in 2024 by vaccinating approximately 150,000 dogs in the eight regions of the Northern Communal Areas (NCA), a 35% increase in vaccinations compared to 2023. The vaccination drives were complemented by regular community awareness programmes and by capacity-building programmes for animal health technicians on dog capture, vaccination and monitoring.

During the 91st General Session, a side event on rabies was organised to identify areas of support for dog-mediated rabies control and elimination in West and Central Africa and to showcase the efforts made through the RACE project. The Delegates of Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Chad, Togo, Central African Republic, Namibia, Zambia, Madagascar and Guinea participated in this discussion. The Delegates of Cameroon and Namibia shared their experiences with rabies control, while the RACE implementing partners, namely Institute Pasteur and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, emphasised their experience in Cameroon and the importance of intersectoral collaboration and a continental approach for rabies control and management. Building on the rabies situational and gap analyses conducted in 2023 and the aforementioned side event, WOAHA maintained regular engagements in 2024 with Central African Republic, Chad, and Democratic Republic of the Congo. As a result of these collaborative efforts, Chad and Central African Republic updated their National Strategic Plans (NSP) for rabies, utilising the UAR template for a national strategic plan to control rabies.

Efforts to strengthen rabies control in the North African region have advanced with a new project grant from Italy. This initiative targets Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, focusing on reviewing NSPs, improving surveillance (both diagnostic and field), and enhancing communication, in collaboration with WOAHA's new Reference Laboratory, the Institute Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie (IZSVe).

For Eastern Africa, WOAHA is progressing on multiple fronts including supporting consultancy work in Somalia for developing its NSP and Eritrea which completed its dog census. Additionally, a sub-regional consultancy is ongoing to assess the implementation of NSPs and rabies elimination efforts across 11 Eastern African countries. This assessment will be helpful to identify country-specific needs to facilitate applications for continental funding to support rabies elimination initiatives.

In 2024, the Asia and the Pacific region continued to emphasise the need to strengthen laboratory capacity at various events, recognising that accurate diagnosis is essential for assessing the rabies burden. In October, WOAHA, in collaboration with WHO South-East Asia Region (WHO SEARO), experts from WOAHA's Reference Laboratory for Rabies in India and WHO's Collaborating Centre in Bengaluru, India, conducted a 5-day joint training workshop to enhance laboratory capacity for rabies diagnosis in animals and humans. The workshop was attended by eight countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste) and combined theoretical knowledge with hands-on training in ante- and post-mortem diagnostic techniques, targeting young and mid-level professionals from the human and animal health sectors. Similarly, Training of Trainers on Mass Dog Vaccination was organised in November in Chiang Mai, Thailand, by WOAHA and Mission Rabies to address challenges in MDV campaigns with a focus on MDV tools, dog ecology, population estimation and the use of ORVs for free-roaming dogs.

A partnership with the Asia Pacific Cities Alliance for Health and Development (APCAT) conducted in the past 2 years has enabled the vaccination rate among dogs in Bali, Indonesia, to be increased to 75%, thanks in particular to the involvement of local authorities in the island.

Finally, in this region and in collaboration with the Quadripartite, WOAHA organised the Tripartite Asia-Pacific Rabies Meeting, held in July 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand, which convened government representatives from 14 rabies-endemic countries to discuss regional strategies for rabies elimination. The participants agreed to strengthen their national action plans, enhance surveillance and vaccination efforts and foster collaboration between human and animal health sectors.

WOAH continues to strengthen its Members' capacity to manage dog populations effectively, particularly in the Middle East and beyond. The Self-Assessment and Monitoring Tool for Dog Population Management (SAM4DPM) has gained significant traction, encouraging Members to evaluate their adherence to WOAH standards while supporting alignment with the 'Zero by 30' initiative. In April 2024, Qatar hosted a sub-regional workshop in Doha focused on advancing dog-mediated rabies control and improving dog population management (DPM) across the Arabian Peninsula. Participants from six WOAH Members worked to strengthen their rabies elimination efforts and align national programmes with WOAH's One Health approach. Recommendations included establishing a Gulf Cooperation Committee for rabies elimination, combining dog population management strategies with rabies vaccination, and increasing scientific research on DPM. Emphasis was placed on the importance of civil society involvement, fostering of public-private partnerships for data sharing, and the need for enhanced training to strengthen regional capacities, with the ultimate goal of eliminating dog-mediated rabies human fatalities by 2030. Insights from European experiences, such as those shared at the sixth WOAH Regional Workshop on Dog Population Management (SDB6) in Montenegro in November 2024, further enriched the regional dialogue. During this workshop, participants from nine Balkan Members discussed strategies for effective dog population management.

In Europe, Rabies eradication is a GF-TADs<sup>1</sup> and One Health priority for all 53 WOAH Members of this region. The GF-TADs Standing Group of Experts on Rabies (SGE) for Europe coordinates the oral rabies vaccination activities in wild carnivores with the overall goal of accelerating the final eradication of rabies, primarily in the Balkan sub-region.

- Communication

WOAH has devoted considerable efforts to creating communication resources aimed at enhancing awareness about rabies. These materials are designed to reach a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including veterinarians, community members and pet owners. They cover a range of topics, including community awareness, responsible dog ownership and effective dog population management. Additionally, outreach campaigns were conducted throughout the year aimed at leveraging social media channels to enhance the dissemination of these tools and increase awareness on rabies. Rabies featured prominently in the Wildlife Situation Report 2. The rabies page on the WOAH website recorded 168,247 views, highlighting strong public engagement with the topic. On 28 September 2024, World Rabies Day, WOAH used this opportunity to highlight, through social media platforms and participation in global events, the tools and support available for rabies elimination.

- Rabies diagnostic support

The WOAH Rabies Reference Laboratory Network (RABLAB) consists of 14 WOAH Reference Laboratories. RABLAB supports WOAH Members with rabies diagnostics, surveillance, capacity building and programme implementation. Key outputs in 2024 included a statement on the importance of using high-quality dog rabies vaccines; collating publications for the UAR Forum's Scientific Watch Bulletin on rabies; and developing a Dog Population Estimation repository. Ongoing activities include the development of guidance for the use of point-of-care tests for rabies and coordinating operational research priorities for rabies.

RABLAB will continue to support WOAH Members in the drafting and implementation of their national strategic plans, including through Laboratory Twinning programmes and the UAR Country Partnership programmes; support WOAH in monitoring international standards to ensure these remain fit for purpose; enhance collaboration among RABLAB members; and disseminate scientific information among WOAH Members and the wider rabies community.

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<sup>1</sup> GF-TADs (Global Framework for the progressive control of transboundary animal diseases)

- United Against Rabies Forum: Implementing 'Zero by 30'

The UAR Forum, hosted by WOAHA on behalf of FAO, WHO and WOAHA, now includes more than 90 members, with representation from 38 countries. This network was launched in 2020 to implement the objectives set out in 'Zero by 30'.

In 2024, three virtual webinars took place: 'Developing a National Strategic Plan for Rabies Control'; 'Bite case management and rabies'; and 'Maximising impact and overcoming resource wastage in mass dog vaccination'. Four newsletters were disseminated to a mailing list of more than 2000 stakeholders throughout the year, highlighting key outputs and resources of the network. These outputs can also be found highlighted in the 2024 United Against Rabies Review, and on the United Against Rabies Forum website.

Key outputs of the network in 2024 included the following: the UAR Partnership Map, which maps where rabies stakeholders are working, and the activities they are conducting; the Scientific Watch Bulletin on Rabies, a monthly collation of published literature on rabies control and elimination; the Human to Dog Ratio and Dog Population Estimation repository, which provides baseline data for countries to plan their dog vaccination campaigns; and the second season of the 'Rabies Today' podcast aimed at improving advocacy for rabies control. The UAR Forum Toolbox and Course section of the website have been continuously updated to ensure relevant tools and resources are made available to stakeholders.

The 2024 UAR Forum Stakeholder Meeting was held as a hybrid event, from 23 to 25 September in Cape Town, South Africa, following the 8th World One Health Congress. The meeting provided an update on progress towards the 'Zero by 30' goal and enabled UAR Forum members to review the outputs of 2024 and propose priorities for the network to focus on in 2025. UAR will continue to prioritise activities that directly contribute to the following objectives: engaging priority rabies-endemic countries and supporting development and implementation of national strategic plans; engaging local authorities and communities to prioritise rabies elimination at the local level; facilitating access to human post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), including supporting the implementation of the Gavi strategy on rabies; promoting improved surveillance, data sharing and data reporting; and supporting advocacy and resource mobilisation for rabies control.

UAR Forum members are encouraged to propose activities that align with the 2025 priorities by using this activity proposal form.

#### **2.4.1.5 Tuberculosis**

WOAHA continues to take the lead in identifying a suitable replacement for the depleted international standard bovine and avian tuberculin. In 2024, the WOAHA *ad hoc* Group on the replacement of the international standard bovine (ISBT) and avian tuberculin (ISAT) met virtually on a regular basis to discuss the protocols and the results of the ongoing trials to calibrate the candidate standards of bovine tuberculin.

With the support of the UK Health Security Agency, two rounds of guinea pig trials were completed to identify the replacement for the ISBT and the third round of trials is planned. The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA, United Kingdom) had completed trials of interferon gamma release assays to support this project. Based on these final rounds of experiment, WOAHA will conclude on the suitability of the proposed replacement for the international standards.

In the case of the ISAT, following the launch of a call for donations of candidate avian tuberculin from private manufacturers, two candidates were identified and subsequently evaluated by the WOAHA *ad hoc* Group as potential replacements for the current ISAT. During 2025, a set of experiments will be planned with the aim of selecting the next WOAHA ISAT.



WOAH met regularly with FAO and WHO to coordinate activities linked to the implementation of the [Roadmap for zoonotic tuberculosis](#). To further contribute to the roadmap, WOAHP published in the three official languages, guidelines for alternative strategies to control *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex infection in livestock. These guidelines are expected to be instrumental in supporting resource-limited countries with a high burden of animal tuberculosis. Further details of the guidelines are given in [Section 2.2.3](#).

#### **2.4.1.6 Wildlife health**

The implementation of WOAHP's Wildlife Health programme continued in 2024 with significant progress and achievements at global and regional levels in six focus areas, as described below. As the five-year implementation programme is due to terminate at the end of 2025, a consultancy to conduct the Wildlife Health programme evaluation will be launched at the beginning of 2025 to inform the revised WOAHP Wildlife Health strategy, planned to be released at the beginning to 2026. In parallel, consultation of WOAHP Delegates to engage them in the design of the revised strategy has started through dedicated sessions at Conferences and meetings of the Regional Commissions. Europe and the Americas have already contributed. This consultation will provide a valuable dataset that will inform the revised Wildlife health framework strategy.

- Collaboration and partnerships

While concrete collaborations with international partners continued in 2024 and led to the development of guidelines, workshops, webinars (e.g. World Wildlife Day 2024) and position papers (e.g. Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management [CPW] One Health paper, Science for Nature and People Partnership [SNAPP] paper on data), WOAHP is advancing its wildlife health and trade agenda by taking over the Secretariat of the International Alliance against Health risks in wildlife trade. This will be an excellent opportunity for WOAHP to access a dedicated and dynamic tool to address this topic in a comprehensive way and build on the work initiated through the Wildlife Health Framework (WHF). In addition, WOAHP has been working on leveraging its partnerships by updating and revising MOUs and work plans both with the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), which were formally endorsed by WOAHP Members at the 91st General Session, while also preparing a formal collaboration agreement (MOU) with the Wildlife Disease Association (WDA) after more than two years of growing collaboration.

Through the WOAHP Collaborating Centre network, at a regional level, the Asia and the Pacific and Europe Regions organised regular wildlife health regional and sub-regional meetings of the network of Focal Points for Wildlife. Moving forward with the Nature4Health (N4H) Initiative in Mongolia, a scoping phase was implemented leading to the organisation of a series of three in-country workshops using a system thinking approach, leading to the co-development of the project's scope and design in collaboration with UNEP, CIC, FAO and Mongolian institutions from the three sectors. Implementation is planned to start in 2025.

- Capacity building

A workshop was organised in Thailand in March 2024 to support the practical implementation of the [Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risks in Wildlife Trade](#), facilitated by experts from three WOAHP Collaborating Centres (two on wildlife, and one on risk analysis) together with a candidate WOAHP Collaborating Centre (Prince Mahidol University, Thailand), and an NGO partner (TRAFFIC). The workshop engaged national authorities in Thailand in interactive sessions which were framed by the guidelines.



Based on a participatory and hands-on methodology developed in collaboration with TRAFFIC and the IUCN, the workshops identified relevant stakeholders to be involved in the discussions through cases studies and to unfold the process proposed in the guidelines. The workshop was a huge success (some described it as 'amazing') demonstrating that the guidelines are in fact fit for purpose.

A consultancy to evaluate the effectiveness, relevance, efficiency coherence, sustainability and impact of the WOAHS Wildlife Focal Point training programme was launched toward the end of the year. The results, along with recommendations to improve the programme, are expected in the first quarter of 2025. This will also inform the new wildlife health strategy.

Leveraging the use of the ALERT Game developed under the EBO-SURSY Project for African communities, WOAHS teamed up with CIRAD, the French agricultural research and cooperation organisation, to deliver four training sessions to 100 participants from the 22 countries involved in the MediLabSecure Project, managed by The Institut Pasteur. In addition, nearly 40 educators from public, animal and environmental health sectors were trained to facilitate ALERT game sessions with their students in Cameroon and Senegal. Through a collaborative and fun approach the game aims to demonstrate the importance of One Health collaboration in real-world surveillance systems scenarios, emphasising the interconnectedness of human, environmental and animal health. The game proved to be a very efficient pedagogical tool highly appreciated by professors in veterinary, wildlife and public health schools and faculties to teach their students about the role of different stakeholders in surveillance systems.

- Guidelines and standards

For guidelines published in 2024, see [Section 2.2.3 Guidelines](#)

A consultancy to look into wild aquatic animal health legislation to better understand the role of Veterinary Services and their partners in addressing these issues was launched toward the end of 2024. Results and best legislation practices pertaining to wild aquatic animal health from nearly 50 countries are expected to be shared in the first quarter of 2025. This study will complement the first one conducted in 2022, which focused on terrestrial animals and led to the creation of a dedicated questionnaire on wildlife health legislation that was piloted in two countries in 2023. Two more pilots are planned in 2025.

- Wildlife health data management

The technical specifications of a Next-Generation Wildlife Health Information System (NG-WHIS) for reporting non-listed wildlife diseases were developed in 2024 and presented to Microsoft Non-Profit, which expressed interest in developing a pilot information system under the Microsoft ecosystem with three priorities: user-friendliness, usability in low connectivity settings and portability for early warning in field situations.

The pilot or proof of concept, which will be developed in the first semester of 2025, would replace and improve upon WAHIS-wild, which was decommissioned. This new system will collect information on wildlife health events which are not listed by WOAHS (so called non-listed diseases), undiagnosed mortality and morbidity events as well as any infectious or infectious processes that impair wild animal health or welfare. The goal of this system is early warning on wild animal health events using a One Health, All Hazard approach. Data gathered through this system will be contextualised to become actionable information, significantly enhancing global knowledge on disease processes in wild hosts, hence bridging gaps in our understanding of biodiversity conservation, animal health and human health.

In parallel, a derisking strategy was initiated to manage all risks related to wildlife health data sharing in the new approach envisioned. Bilateral discussions were held with several international stakeholders working on or interested in the matter. These discussions culminated in a global online meeting that brought together colleagues from the Quadripartite, academia, global NGOs involved in wildlife health data, WOAAH Delegates or their representatives, and the WOAAH Working Group on Wildlife. This collaborative process led to the development of a derisking strategy based on four pillars: creating purpose and added value for system users; building trust within a community of users; establishing robust governance and processes, including exploring a legal toolkit; and developing an engagement strategy.

In addition, the monthly situation report information on WOAAH-listed diseases affecting wildlife species produced by the Data Integration and Preparedness and Resilience Departments and published on the WOAAH [Wildlife online portal](#) was reformatted and associated with a shorter illustrated version highlighted key findings and adapted to the general public.

- Science and knowledge

The EBO-SURSY Project was closed in July 2024. A final report showcasing the main achievements was developed and disseminated in March 2024. Over 60 scientific peer reviewed publications were produced over the past 7 years, showcasing the work of 46 PhD and Master students and their senior fellow researchers, from more than 30 different institutions, advancing global and regional knowledge on viral haemorrhagic fevers, including Rift Valley fever (RVF) and Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF), in animals and humans.

In parallel, negotiations with the EU for the past two years ended with the securing of a € 20 million project called ZOOSURSY to build on and sustain the work initiated in Africa through EBO-SURSY. A wider range of partners (University of Helsinki, Finland; Helmholtz Institute for One Health, Germany) will join the previous consortium (Institut Pasteur, CIRAD and the Research Institute for Development [IRD, France]) to support capacity building, surveillance strengthening and pandemic preparedness for emerging and re-emerging zoonotic diseases in 17 African countries.

Finally, several articles were published in peer review journals, such as:

- Awada, L., Hamilton, K., Huchison, J., Marrana, M., Torres, G., Weber-Vintzel, L. and Tizzani, P., 2024. Facing SARS-CoV-2 emergence on the animal health perspective: The role of the World Organisation for Animal Health in preparedness and official reporting of disease occurrence. *Zoonoses and Public Health*.
- Thompson, L., Cayol, C., Awada, L., Muset, S., Shetty, D., Wang, J. and Tizzani, P., 2024. Role of the World Organisation for Animal Health in global wildlife disease surveillance. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*, 11, p.1269530.

- Communication

Implementation of WOAAH's wildlife health communication strategy continued in 2024. A series of communication products (videos, targeted social media campaigns, etc.) were developed to support WOAAH's change of narrative to embrace all (domestic and wild) animal health. Videos such as 'Tuberculosis in wildlife' and 'Wildlife health is everyone's health' showed the importance of wildlife to ecosystem health and therefore global health, the key role of Veterinary Services in safeguarding both wildlife and domestic animal health and the important role of surveillance of wildlife to better anticipate disease outbreaks.

Social media posts featuring wildlife products or project results are the most consulted by the public, which shows the interest of our audience for this topic. Moreover, for the second year in a row, WOAAH received the LinkedIn award for the most viewed post; both these awards were for posts featuring wildlife health issues.

To celebrate WOAAH's 100 anniversary, the video '100 years of WOAAH and wildlife' was produced (1140 views) and shown at the 91st General Session in 2024. To reinforce institutional visibility, a kiosk highlighting wildlife health products developed under the wildlife health framework was set up at the General session, while a booth was well attended at the European Wildlife Disease Association (EWDA) Conference in September 2024.

In addition, a webinar featuring a panel discussion with speakers from the EcoHealth Alliance, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Wildlife Disease Association (WDA), was organised for World Wildlife Day (CITES Initiative) to discuss the question 'Wildlife health: what is at stake?'. The event was attended by more than 400 participants from 83 countries. In parallel, the Asia and the Pacific Region supported the organisation of national events in relation to the 2023 World Wildlife Day theme 'Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation' in Laos, Nepal and Singapore.

The last WOAAH *Panorama* issue, featuring Wildlife Health and Biodiversity, was released in mid-2024. The issue aimed to provide practical solutions to address the significant challenges posed to wildlife health and biodiversity through groundbreaking articles and opinions produced by wildlife health experts.

## **2.4.2 Transboundary animal diseases**

### **2.4.2.1 Strategic global context**

The 14th Global Steering Committee meeting (GSC14) of GF-TADs convened across three sessions in spring 2024, bringing together approximately 160 participants through virtual meetings (30 April, 7 May) and a final in-person gathering in Paris (17 May) during the 91st General Session. Marking GF-TADs' 20th anniversary, the meeting assessed progress in transboundary animal disease control while establishing future directions. Key outcomes included the launch of a new HPAI Control Strategy, development of a resource mobilisation strategy, and clear timelines for implementation – with governance proposals to be developed. While celebrating successes, such as a reduction in the number of rinderpest holding facilities and improved FMD and PPR situations in certain areas, the sessions highlighted critical challenges, including funding gaps for transboundary animal disease prevention, control and eradication. A pre-meeting stakeholder survey revealed 70% satisfaction with current governance structures, while indicating the need for enhanced monitoring and resource mobilisation. The meeting concluded with concrete steps for strengthening global–regional–national coordination and developing sustainable funding mechanisms for future animal health initiatives. A meeting of the [Regional Steering Committee for Europe](#) was held on 1 October as a side event during the WOAAH Regional Conference for Europe. The Committee reviewed the progress made on priority topics, the programme for the coming year and updated terms of reference, and re-elected Dr Bernard Van Goethem, DG SANTE European Commission, as chair.

A meeting of the [Regional Steering Committee for the Americas](#) was held on 4 November. The Committee reviewed the progress made on priority topics, the programme for the coming year and updated terms of reference, and elected Dr Koren Custer, USDA, as chair.

#### 2.4.2.2 African swine fever

African swine fever (ASF) continues to be a priority for WOAAH and its Members. We are committed to support our Members' efforts in reducing the global impact by improving their capability to manage the disease, enhancing regional and international coordination and cooperation and supporting business continuity.

- GF-TADs initiative for the global control of ASF

In 2024, WOAAH continued to implement activities under the GF-TADs initiative for the global control of ASF (Global Initiative), in collaboration with FAO and other technical partners. Launched in July 2020, the Global Initiative seeks to achieve the global control of ASF.

Integral to the implementation of the Global Initiative are the activities of the regional Standing Groups of Experts on ASF (SGEs-ASF), aimed at strengthening regional dialogue, cooperation and coordination on ASF prevention and control. In June 2024, the 9th SGE-ASF Meeting for the Asia and the Pacific was held in person in Makati, Philippines, and was focused on risk communication and community engagement. In April 2024, the 22nd SGE-ASF Meeting for Europe was held in Mecklenburg, Germany, on the control of ASF in wild boar populations and, in September 2024, the 23rd SGE-ASF Meeting for Europe was held in Ohrid, North Macedonia, with a focus on cross-border cooperation. In October 2024, the 4th SGE-ASF Meeting for Africa was held online and focused on outbreak management.

To facilitate cooperation and dialogue across the SGEs-ASF, the Global Coordination Committee for ASF (ASF GCC) was launched in May 2023, bringing together the Chairs of the GFTADs Regional Steering Committees and SGE-ASF members. In 2024, the second meeting of the ASF GCC was held on the margins of WOAAH's 91st General Session to discuss technical priorities in the near future and the key strategic priorities of each region.

- Strengthening laboratory diagnostics for ASF and ASF vaccine monitoring

WOAH continues to work closely with its network of seven ASF Reference Laboratories to harmonise, standardise, validate and make available ASF diagnostic assays; to provide expertise and training for WOAAH and its Members in relation to ASF diagnosis, surveillance and control; and to collect, analyse and disseminate epidemiological information on the global occurrence of ASF and the genetic characterisation of ASF virus.

In 2024, the Network of Reference Laboratories for ASF released a manual on the protocols and guidelines for laboratory diagnosis of ASF. It also actively monitored progress on the development and use of ASF vaccine and provided technical advice to the Biological Standard Commission to address Member comments on draft Section C of the *Terrestrial Manual* chapter on the manufacture of safe and efficacious vaccines for ASF, which is expected to be adopted in May 2025.

- ASF notification and situation reports

WOAH continues to monitor notifications of the occurrence of ASF through WAHIS and generates reports providing an update of the ASF situation at both global and regional level. Situation reports for ASF are published periodically and are available online. The reports cover the updates on ASF occurrences and include other significant updates and key recommendations for Members.

- Technical support for the implementation of regional and national strategies for the prevention and control of ASF

WOAH Regional and Subregional Representations co-organised or participated in several national or regional ASF meetings and workshops and projects in 2024, including the following:

4th ASF Coordination Meeting for South-East Asia, in November 2024, to develop the implementation plan for ASEAN<sup>2</sup> ASF Prevention and Strategy and agree on the baseline and targets for its M&E indicators.

PVS Evaluation Follow-up mission with ASF specific content, conducted in Timor Leste in October 2024, to monitor progress in the performance of the Veterinary Services against WOAHS international standards.

SGE-ASF expert mission to Albania in April 2024, to propose control and eradication measures under local conditions.

### **2.4.2.3 Foot and mouth disease**

WOAH continued to support Members on the implementation of Global FMD Control Strategy activities by strengthening coordination with FAO through the joint FMD working group. The regional roadmap meetings, regional advisory groups and various Progressive Control Pathway for Foot and Mouth Disease (PCP-FMD) tools, including WOAHS Reference Laboratories for FMD, were used as the platforms and resources to support Members.

The WOAHS/FAO Reference Laboratory Network for FMD continued to actively support all the regional roadmap meetings by providing updates on the global FMD situation and information on vaccine matching and selection. During its annual meeting, held in Rome, Italy, in September 2024, the Network noted as one of the key events the FMD outbreaks due to serotype SAT 2 in the Middle East and North Africa. The Network has continued to collaborate on the following: vaccine selection for endemic pools; FMD vaccine testing to identify indicative responses on performance; and studies on correlation between vaccine-induced antibodies and protection. Following the publication in 2023 of an article to promote wider awareness of the Nagoya Protocol, the Network has continued to collaborate with other disease networks and stakeholders to improve the exchange of biological material, not only for research activities but also for the development of new, epidemiologically relevant vaccines and other diagnostic tools.

- Strengthening laboratory diagnostics for FMD

To enhance the capacity of veterinary laboratories, especially in areas lacking FMD diagnostic facilities, WOAHS provides its Members with various solutions through the PVS Pathway. The ongoing WOAHS Laboratory Twinning project between the United Kingdom (Pirbright Institute) and the FMD National Reference Laboratories of Kenya and Jordan aims to build improved diagnostic capacity for FMD. This initiative will allow more Members in the region to access high-quality FMD diagnostic testing and technical expertise.

- Regional approach to FMD control

The regional approach to capacity building in the control of FMD follows the seven FMD virus pools but the dynamics of livestock movement and trade patterns increase the risk, spread and emergence of FMD serotypes O and SAT 2 into new geographical locations. In 2024, WOAHS, in collaboration with FAO, conducted regional coordination meetings with the following aims: to support Members in exchanging information regarding the FMD situation, to promote the effective utilisation of existing tools, including *Terrestrial*

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<sup>2</sup> ASEAN: Association of Southeast Asian Nations



Code standards and guidelines to, among others, prevent further spread of serotype SAT 2, strengthen and revise national FMD control strategies and strengthen laboratory networks. The Regional Advisory Group for FMD and PPR for West Eurasia met in July 2024, and the first in-person (hybrid) meeting since the COVID-19 pandemic took place in September for Southern and Eastern Africa.

The 27th Meeting of the South-East Asia and China Foot and Mouth Disease Campaign (SEACFMD) Sub-Commission was held in September 2024, in person for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting included a foresight exercise on the future of the FMD situation in the region and to guide the development of the upcoming SEACFMD Roadmap 2026–2030.

All the Members participating in regional coordination meetings have applied the Self-Assessment Tool (PCP-FMD SAT) to assess their level of implementation of FMD measures. The PCP-FMD SAT is aligned with the PVS Pathway. In 2024, three Members of the Africa Region (Côte D'Ivoire, Togo and Liberia) advanced to PCP-FMD stage 1 upon the approval of their respective Risk Assessment Plan (RAP) by the Regional Advisory Group. The GF-TADs FMD Working Group also continues to innovate and simplify the process as well as providing technical recommendations on Members' submitted plans. WOAHA continued to provide training and guidelines to Members regarding the requirements for official recognition. In 2024, Liechtenstein was added to the list of countries or zones free from FMD. WOAHA continues to provide Members whose status has been suspended or whose control programmes have been withdrawn with guidance on the standards and procedure for reinstatement of official status.

- Review of the Global FMD Control Strategy

Following an external review of the implementation of the Global FMD Control Strategy, in June 2024 the FMD Working Group and some senior PCP-Support Officers met face-to-face for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic to reflect on the work plan and develop a strategic direction based on the review recommendations. WOAHA, in collaboration with its resource partners, continues to prioritise and work towards meeting the objectives of the Global FMD Control Strategy by 2027, and has started to plan the development of the next Strategy, which will be based on the lessons learnt and adapted to the current and evolving animal health situation of FMD and other transboundary animal diseases.

#### **2.4.2.4 Peste des petits ruminants**

In 2024, WOAHA and FAO further continued their collaboration under the GF-TADs umbrella for the implementation of the PPR Global Control and Eradication Strategy ([PPR GCES](#)), supporting all partners involved in the different regions and turning the [Blueprint](#) developed in 2022 into updated regional approaches.

- Support to regional activities

Jointly with FAO and AU-IBAR, WOAHA is actively contributing to the establishment of the Pan-African PPR Secretariat, with the support of an € 8 million grant from the European Commission. A key objective of the Secretariat is to coordinate and harmonise PPR control and eradication activities on the African continent. In addition, in April 2024, WOAHA, FAO and AU-IBAR organised an Inter-REC meeting during which the sub-regional PPR Strategy for the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) region was validated. Together with FAO, WOAHA has also conducted regional coordination meetings to support the revision or the development of PPR eradication strategies in line with the PPR Blueprint in West Africa, as well as an episystem meeting in Central Africa where the formal launch of the episystem guidelines took place.



- Strengthening laboratory diagnostics for PPR

In 2024, the WOAHP Reference Laboratory Network for PPR welcomed the addition of ICAR-NIVEDI, India, which was adopted as a Reference Laboratory at WOAHP's 91st General Session, held in May. In addition to ICAR-NIVEDI, the network was managed by the other three WOAHP PPR Reference Laboratories, namely CIRAD, France, The Pirbright Institute, United Kingdom, and the China Animal Health and Epidemiology Center (CAHEC), People's Republic of China. In addition to the Reference Laboratories, the Network comprises 20 other member laboratories. The WOAHP Reference Laboratory Network has supported its members by organising proficiency testing, webinars and an annual workshop, as well as keeping Members updated through the annual newsletter.

- Other capacity-building activities

By the end of 2024, a total of 13 PVS missions with a PPR-specific component had been conducted. The PVS reports link to the PPR Monitoring and Assessment Tool (PMAT) as it provides objective field verification of PMAT staging with targeted recommendations that feed into the National Strategic Plans (NSPs). WOAHP will continue to support Members with elaborating their PPR control and eradication plans and provide training on WOAHP procedures for official recognition of PPR free status and for the endorsement of official PPR control programmes. In 2024, training of this type was conducted in People's Republic of China and targeted countries in the ASEAN region.

In 2024, following the finalisation of the revised PMAT (PMAT2), FAO and WOAHP continued their work on developing the e-learning module to assist Members in the efficient use of the tool, which will enable them to monitor and evaluate the status of their PPR control and eradication activities and their progress along the stages of the PPR GCES. In addition, the development of a digital version of the PMAT is being finalised, which will help users at the country level to run the assessment as a collective exercise and facilitate PMAT submission and assessment by the Regional Advisory Groups (RAGs); for users at the Global and Regional GFTADs Secretariat, the digital PMAT will provide an overview of common gaps and priorities for Members to address.

The Regional Sahel Pastoralism Support Project (PRAPS) continued to provide technical support to its beneficiary Members in the Sahel. The PRAPS project is supporting the implementation of PPR national strategic plans in the beneficiary Members. The project also assisted a few other countries in West Africa (Benin, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire) in the development of their PPR eradication programmes. As a result, PRAPS countries and Benin, Togo and Côte d'Ivoire are progressing well with their PPR control programme.

WOAHP encourages Members that have never reported PPR to implement the required surveillance and other necessary activities to ensure compliance with the relevant WOAHP standards with regard to official PPR free status and subsequently undertake the procedures for submission of an application to WOAHP for the official recognition of their PPR free status. FAO and AU-IBAR have expressed their willingness to assist Members in this regard.

OHRT<sup>3</sup> BMZ<sup>4</sup> TADs and PC-TADs<sup>5</sup> projects covering Cameroon, Namibia, Kenya and Ethiopia are ongoing and, in the case of Kenya, they are helping to strengthen the veterinary workforce and implement the PPR vaccination campaign.

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<sup>3</sup> OHRT: One Health approach towards Rabies and Transboundary Diseases control

<sup>4</sup> BMZ: German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development

<sup>5</sup> PC-TAD: Prevention and Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases for the benefit of smallholder farmers

- Support for vaccine access

In addition, the WOAHA [PPR vaccine bank](#) has continued to give Members the opportunity to access, at a negotiated price, quality vaccines in accordance with an international procurement procedure.

#### **2.4.2.5 Lumpy skin disease**

In 2024, updates to Section C of the *Terrestrial Manual* [Chapter 3.4.12. Lumpy skin disease](#) (LSD) were adopted following an extensive consultation with experts on issues relating to vaccine quality, to ensure that the standards reflect the latest science and provide Members with up-to-date requirements for LSD vaccines.

In Asia and the Pacific, a study was commissioned to assess the impact of LSD, resulting in the publication of a [final report](#) on the epidemiology of the disease in the region, associated risk factors, impacts and prevention and control measures employed by Members. In South Asia, a [workshop](#) on LSD control was organised in August 2024 to strengthen the epidemiology and laboratory networks to support the control. In South-East Asia, WOAHA's Subregional Representation in Bangkok, Thailand, was instrumental in supporting ASEAN in the development of an ASEAN LSD Prevention and Control Strategy, along with a monitoring and evaluation framework, which was endorsed by ASEAN in October 2024. The fifth LSD [coordination meeting](#) was organised virtually in December 2024 to review the progress of prevention and control efforts in South-East Asia.

In the Europe region, the [13th Meeting of the Standing Group of Experts on LSD](#) met virtually in February 2024 to discuss issues concerning surveillance, vaccination campaigns and characterisation of circulating strains. The meeting also endorsed a comprehensive set of recommendations for LSD vaccination and surveillance.

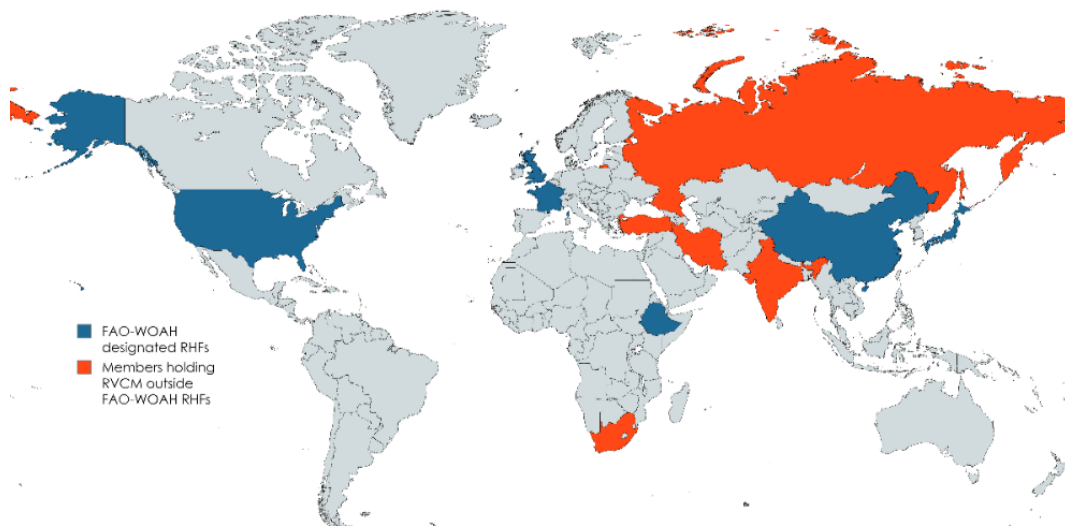
#### **2.4.2.6 Rinderpest post-eradication**

The number of WOAHA Members holding rinderpest virus-containing materials (RVCM) as of December 2024 remained the same as that reported in 2022 and 2023. Eleven Members still hold RVCM, six of which have FAO-WOAH-designated Rinderpest Holding Facilities; the other five Members have not yet taken the decision to destroy or sequester their RVCM. The global distribution of RVCM in WOAHA Members is shown on the map below.

As per the requirements of the *Terrestrial Code*, WOAHA has launched its annual survey of Members holding RVCM outside designated Rinderpest Holding Facilities. WOAHA has actively engaged in discussions with these five Members to advocate for compliance with WOAHA Resolution 21/2017 by taking a decision regarding the destruction or sequestration of the respective RVCM.

The FAO-WOAH Joint Advisory Committee for Rinderpest met on the 26 April 2024 (virtual meeting), under the auspices of the GF-TADs Management Committee. The two main topics discussed at the meeting were the review of pending research applications and the review of the checklist of inspection of Rinderpest Holding Facilities.

WOAHA and FAO commissioned a team of independent inspectors to perform the periodic inspections of two of their designated Rinderpest Holding Facilities. The objective of the inspection is to assess whether the facilities continue to comply with the requirements of their Mandate, as defined by WOAHA Resolution 27/2023.



**Figure 15.** Global distribution of laboratory twinning projects including the role of the participants and the location of newly designated WOAHO Reference Centres.

#### 2.4.2.7 Avian and other influenzas

High pathogenic avian influenza continues to be a global threat, impacting national economies, public health, food security and biosecurity.

WOAH Members adopted Resolution No. 28 at the 90th General Session in May 2023 to guide future avian influenza control efforts while protecting wildlife, supporting the poultry industry and ensuring trade continuity. The two-year resolution implementation framework (June 2023 – May 2025) guided our activities during 2024. All of the resolution’s 19 recommendations have at least one related activity underway and 16 of the 29 indicators have already been achieved within the first year of implementation.

As requested by our Members, WOAHO is developing guidelines for avian influenza surveillance in small-scale poultry holdings in resource-limited settings. The WOAHO Working Group on Wildlife, and experts from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration published a practical guide for authorised field responders to HPAI in marine mammals with a focus on biosecurity, sample collection for virus detection and carcass disposal. WOAHO, in collaboration with the International Alliance for Biological Standardization (IABS), co-organised a meeting on vaccination and surveillance for HPAI at Paris in October 2024 to assess the latest scientific data for HPAI surveillance programmes in vaccinated poultry. The meeting’s conclusions and recommendations were published.

- OFFLU (WOAH-FAO network of expertise on animal influenza) and WOAHO scientific network activities

WOAH continued to coordinate the OFFLU network, while also hosting the OFFLU Secretariat and maintaining the OFFLU website.

In 2024; the OFFLU network regularly met virtually to discuss and share data on circulating animal influenza threats. The experts analysed the virological update of the virus circulating in dairy cows and compiled diagnostic guidance for sample collection and testing in cattle. Scientific documents were published which included a statement on high pathogenicity avian influenza in dairy cows, diagnostic guidance for HPAI in dairy cattle and avian influenza epidemiological and genetic updates. Additionally, OFFLU swine and equine influenza experts also met to share recent surveillance and research findings.

OFFLU held its global technical meeting at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, in July 2024, during which the operational methods and the terms of reference of various OFFLU technical activities (including avian influenza, swine influenza, equine influenza and wildlife/wild bird influenza, applied epidemiology, human–animal interface and socio-economics) were discussed and updated. The network organised a webinar in July 2024 (English, Spanish) on Avian Influenza Matching (AIM) for Poultry Vaccines to share the second technical report, and this was followed by an executive summary report (October 2024) of the project. These reports assist decision-makers in WOAHA Members with developing evidence-based guidelines and policies for effective vaccination strategies.

The network contributed animal influenza data to the February and September 2024 WHO Vaccine Composition Meetings. The OFFLU network regularly contributes to WHO influenza Vaccine Composition Meetings (VCM). The network participated in the February and September 2024 WHO VCMs and provided H5, H7 and H9 avian influenza virus sequences isolated in Europe, Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas. In addition, H1 and H3 swine influenza virus sequences were shared. Antigenic data were generated by haemagglutination inhibition assay using WHO Collaborating Centre and OFFLU ferret-origin reagents. The full reports are available online.

The OFFLU proficiency testing panel for the year 2024 was received by WOAHA/FAO Reference Centres and was designed to assess the capability of the laboratories to detect and characterise isolates of avian influenza. The round was coordinated by the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (ACDP), a WOAHA Reference Laboratory.

The report of the OFFLU Steering and Executive Committee meeting held in April 2024 is available online.

The WOAHA avian influenza scientific network continued to deliver concrete outputs that contribute to the mitigation of risks to public and animal health posed by zoonotic animal influenza viruses. The WOAHA scientific network, FAO and WHO are in regular communication to share public health and animal health data so that risk assessments can be continually updated on issues related to the animal–human interface, including, for example, the publication of a joint FAO/WHO/WOAHA public health assessment of recent influenza A(H5) virus events in animals and people.

- HPAI notifications and situation reports

WOAHA continues to monitor notifications of the occurrence of avian influenza through WAHIS and generates situation reports that provide an update of the avian influenza situation at both global and regional level. The reports briefly present the key risks driving current events – how the strains are interacting with hosts (both wild birds and poultry, and sometimes humans) and the environment (seasonality, livestock husbandry systems, ecosystems) and how the events may evolve in the months ahead. In parallel with these written situation reports, WOAHA has developed monthly situation report videos for social media, that explain the progress of HPAI as reported by Members.

- Advocacy and communication

WOAHA has developed several videos with experts to raise awareness on avian influenza and address key questions. These videos were disseminated across social media channels throughout the year.

A video statement given by the Director General of WOAHA, in response to the increasing number of dairy cattle infected by the virus in the United States of America, was released to advocate for increased surveillance of avian influenza's spread in mammals and was disseminated across social media channels and on the WOAHA global website.

Statements to inform and advise our Members were published and regularly updated as scientific information became available:

- Avian influenza vaccination and why it should not be a barrier to safe trade
  - High pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) in cattle (December 2024)
  - Wildlife under threat as avian influenza reaches Antarctica
- GF-TADs avian influenza global strategy

On the margins of the 91st General Session in May 2024, the GF-TADs Global strategy for the prevention and control of highly pathogenic avian influenza (2024–2033) was launched. A [brief version of the strategy](#) was presented to Members and stakeholders. The updated global strategy adopts a systems approach, integrating HPAI with other broader global issues, and aims for long-term improvements in the poultry sector. Emphasising the One Health approach, it advocates for collaboration across the public health, wildlife and environmental sectors to protect and transform poultry value chains. The strategy encourages the use of established and innovative methods to reduce infections and losses and provides a blueprint for countries to formulate effective national plans based on the latest scientific advances and the specific needs of their regions.

- Regional coordination and capacity-building activities

WOAH is committed to assisting Members with developing and implementing sustainable and OH-based national control programmes for the control of avian influenza. In 2024, this was achieved throughout the year, by organising and supporting several virtual and in-person training sessions and meetings with WOA regional offices, with the objective to improve the capacity of Veterinary Services to control avian influenza under the OH approach.

In the Americas, under the umbrella of GF-TADs, informative webinars were organised in April, May and November 2024 to share updates on the detection of HPAI in dairy cattle and humans in the United States of America, with the presence of animal and human health authorities from that country.

In Europe the second meeting of the Standing Group of Experts on HPAI for Europe under GF-TADs was held at Samarkand, Uzbekistan, in September 2024. This joint initiative involving WOA, FAO and the European Commission (DG SANTE) aimed to enhance cooperation in preventing and controlling HPAI. The participants reviewed prevention and control strategies, exchanged epidemiological information, shared best practices and formulated a coordinated strategy based on the OH approach.

In the Asia and the Pacific region, the scientific network on avian influenza and other avian diseases organised a [Regional Workshop for Avian Disease Prevention and Control in Seoul, Republic of Korea](#) in August 2024 and continued to support Members to strengthen the regional effort to control avian viral and bacterial infectious diseases, with a particular emphasis on avian Influenza. The regional workshop was held in collaboration with the [One Health Poultry Hub](#) and recommended continuing disease surveillance and monitoring activities in domestic and wild birds, improving information sharing, diagnostic capacity and early warning systems and strengthening collaborations to initiate the regional plan of actions based on the global avian influenza strategy.

#### **2.4.2.8 Registration of diagnostic kits**

In accordance with Resolution No. XXIX adopted at the 71st General Session in 2003, WOA maintains its [register of certified diagnostic kits](#). In 2024, two new diagnostic kits were included in the register, while two others were renewed for a further period of five years ([Resolution N°34](#) adopted during the 91st General Session).

Additionally, and after endorsement by the Biological Standards Commission and the Aquatic Animal Health Commission, the WOAAH Assembly was informed that, in agreement with the Director General, the Secretariat for Registration of Diagnostic Kits would proceed with the complete freeze on Register of Diagnostic Kits activities and all related procedures, starting after the 91st General Session, for a renewed period of 24 months, thus until May 2026. As a result:

- Validated and approved kits will maintain their certification;
- No renewal processing will be engaged, even if registered kits reach the five-year due date;
- All incomplete applications by May 2024 will be withdrawn, with return of fees to applicants, if applicable;
- No potential contestation procedures will not be reviewed;
- No new applications will be reviewed or validated;
- Consideration will be given to exceptional cases, linked to an emergency animal health situation, upon Members' request.

This decision will enable WOAAH's team to optimise the use of the limited resources allocated to the Register, thereby increasing the value of our actions. It will have no impact on Members, on kits included in the Register or on potential new applicants, due to the negligible quantity of kits involved, and the limited value WOAAH's Register brings to applicants. After 20 years of existence, there are only 18 registered kits, indicating the system is not fit for purpose. The entire system will be reviewed in consultation with stakeholders, as previously indicated, by exploring:

- Mechanisms that could be implemented for facilitating regulatory harmonisation of diagnostic kits.
- The value of setting minimum criteria needed for reliable registration of diagnostic kits, facilitating accessibility to Members regardless of their regulatory capacity.
- Streamlining the kit recognition procedure(s) and aligning WOAAH Collaborating Centres and Reference Laboratories with activities relating to the registration of diagnostic kits.

### 2.4.3 Animal welfare

The WOAAH [Global Animal Welfare Strategy](#) continues to provide guidance for WOAAH's activities in the field of animal welfare. The work programme for 2024 included activities under the four strategic pillars of the Strategy. Key outcomes are described below:

- Pillar 1: Development of animal welfare standards

The Code Commission progressed its work to revise the following chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*:

- Chapter 7.1. 'Introduction to the recommendation for animal welfare' to include the 'Five domains concept'.
- A comprehensive revision of Chapters 7.2. 'Transport of animals by sea', Chapter 7.3. 'Transport of animals by land' and Chapter 7.4. 'Transport of animals by air';
- A comprehensive revision of Chapter 7.6. 'Killing of animals for disease control purposes'.

For more details, please refer to the relevant [reports](#) of the Code Commission.



- Pillar 2: Capacity building and education

A capacity-building project for South-East Asia was launched, which will develop tools to support Members in the implementation of recommendations described in Chapter 7.13. 'Animal welfare and pig production systems' and Chapter 7.6. 'Killing of animals for disease control purposes' of the *Terrestrial Code*.

A network of the four WOAHA Collaborating Centres on Animal Welfare was created, including the development of its Terms of Reference. The objective of this network is to provide support to WOAHA Members from a globally coordinated perspective.

Workshops for WOAHA National Focal Points for Animal Welfare were conducted for English-speaking countries of the WOAHA Africa Region and for the WOAHA Europe region.

Phase one of the Observatory Thematic Study on Animal welfare during transport by land and sea to survey Members' implementation of WOAHA standards relevant to animal welfare during transport by land and sea was completed (see [Section 2.2.5](#). Observatory).

- Pillar 3: Advocacy and communication

The Sixth WOAHA Animal Welfare Global Forum 'Exploring how WOAHA Collaborating Centres can support Members to improve animal welfare', held Mexico, brought together representatives of the WOAHA Animal Welfare Collaborating Centres, Members and national Focal Points for Animal Welfare. The Forum focused on strengthening the relationship between Members and Collaborating Centres and informing the development of a work plan for the new network of WOAHA Collaborating Centres on Animal Welfare.

WOAHA continued to support UNEP to implement the 5th United Nations Environment Assembly's Resolution No. 1: 'Animal welfare–environment–sustainable development nexus', together with the other Quadripartite partners.

WOAHA participated in a number of events hosted by partner organisations, including the World Cargo Symposium and the World Dairy Summit of the International Dairy Federation.

- Pillar 4: Implementation of animal welfare standards and policies

The WOAHA Regional Animal Welfare Strategy Advisory Group for Asia-Pacific progressed implementation of its [Third Action plan \(2024 – 2028\)](#).

A 'whole journey scenario' workshop, with participants from the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, was held to support Members in the implementation of recommendations of Chapter 7.2. 'Transport of animals by sea' and Chapter 7.3. 'Transport of animals by land' of the *Terrestrial Code*.

Detailed information about WOAHA's animal welfare activities is available on the [WOAHA website](#).

#### **2.4.4 Aquatic animal health**

The [WOAHA Aquatic Animal Health Strategy](#) (AAHS) is being implemented over four years (2021–2025) and aims to improve aquatic animal health and welfare worldwide. The strategy guides actions to strengthen four areas: standards, capacity building, resilience and leadership.

During 2024, the AAHS continued to address the highest priority needs in aquatic animal health and focused resources on activities identified in the strategy. The key highlights are presented below:

- Standards

The Aquatic Animals Commission progressed work to ensure that the standards in the *Aquatic Code* and *Aquatic Manual* are scientifically sound, meet WOAH Members' needs to manage risks, facilitate safe trade and improve aquatic animal health and welfare, through the revision of existing standards and the development of new standards in the *Aquatic Code* and the *Aquatic Manual* (refer to Section 2.2.2.4. for details).

- Focal Point training

In 2024, an in-person training workshop for national Focal Points for Aquatic Animals of French-speaking countries of the WOAH Africa Region was held in Tunisia. This workshop provided a forum to engage with Members, identify regional needs and priorities, and promote implementation of WOAH standards for aquatic animal health.

- Regional aquatic animal health networks

The establishment of WOAH regional networks for aquatic animal health has proven to be an effective mechanism to operationalise the AAHS to meet regional needs and strengthen collaboration. Established regional networks in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Central Asia and Transcaucasia and the Middle East continued to implement their respective work plans during 2024.

- Engaging WOAH's scientific networks

The WOAH network of Collaborating Centres for aquatic animal health aimed at facilitating collaboration among these Centres continued to implement its work plan during 2024 and expanded to include some WOAH Reference Laboratory experts to strengthen support for WOAH Members for aquatic animal disease diagnosis and control.

- Increasing the use of the WOAH PVS Pathway

The WOAH Aquatic PVS Pathway supports Members with implementing WOAH standards and continually improving their Aquatic Animal Health Services. Following the identification of barriers to the implementation of standards and the promotion of the use of the PVS Pathway among Members, an increase in PVS Evaluations of Aquatic Animal Health Services has occurred, with PVS Evaluations conducted in Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, and Tonga (non-Member) during 2024.

- Use of antimicrobials in aquatic animals and AMR

WOAH developed an e-learning module on the responsible use of antimicrobials in aquatic animals and this is currently being piloted. The module provides Members with didactic information on technical matters relating to antimicrobial resistance in aquaculture.

WOAH is close to finalising the Guidelines for monitoring AMU in aquaculture at field level, designed to support Members' aquaculture globally in planning and executing monitoring programmes of AMU at field level in this sector.

The first regional Focal Point workshop dedicated to antimicrobial use and resistance in aquaculture was convened in the WOAH Asia and the Pacific Region.

- Emergency management in aquatic animals

The first WOAH Regional Workshop dedicated to Emergency preparedness for aquatic animals was held in the WOAH Asia and the Pacific region and highlighted the importance of training, simulation exercises, and the convergence of terrestrial and aquatic animal health management to enhance preparedness and response efforts.

## 2.4.5 Emergency management and preparedness

In 2024, WOAAH continued to deliver the 'Fortifying Institutional Resilience Against Biological Threats' (First) project, which aims to enhance WOAAH's ability to respond to emergencies, strengthen Members' capacities, particularly in Africa, and to demonstrate WOAAH's value as a security partner. The Project is supported by Global Affairs Canada's Weapons Threat Reduction Program.

As mandated at the 89th General Session, and after several COVID-19 after-action reviews WOAAH is committed to improving its institutional response to global and regional incidents with a significant potential impact on animal health and welfare resulting from a range of hazards. An incident management system (IMS) will help WOAAH fulfil its mandate, improve its internal coordination during incidents and coordination with partners (such as FAO and WHO), clarify roles during incidents, and address gaps in an emergency management culture at the Organisation. The IMS will align with and respect WOAAH's mandate, the expectations of Members and the role of other organisations, whilst integrating a health-security function. After a negotiated procurement procedure, the selected service provider and WOAAH began the development of the IMS through a phased approach including scoping and analysis, development, testing, and refinement. To finalise its development and identify areas for final refinement, an internal tabletop simulation exercise will be delivered in January 2025.

To better support its Members in emergency management, *the ad hoc* Group on Veterinary Emergencies (Standards) was convened by the Director General following the request of the Code Commission to develop standards on emergency management. This followed Resolution No 28 adopted by the Assembly at the 89th General Session, which recommended integrating emergency management into WOAAH's international standards. This recommendation was further supported by the outcomes of the April 2023 WOAAH Global Conference on Emergency Management. Two meetings of the *ad hoc* group were held in 2024, the [first](#) to define the scope of the proposed content, and the second to begin drafting the relevant chapter. The *ad hoc* Group agreed that the chapter should focus on the core principles of emergency management, which would be most important and relevant for the Veterinary Services of WOAAH's Members. A first draft of the chapter will be submitted to the Code Commission for review when it meets in February 2025.

Under the First project to support its Members in Africa, WOAAH worked to address the needs of the nine project beneficiary countries under the pillars of disease intelligence, emergency management, sustainable laboratories, and veterinary legislation. Training needs were identified at the start of the project in 2023 based on the collaboratively developed work plans. Through collaborations with experts and partner institutions, delivery of [activities](#) occurred at the national and regional levels, covering the topics of biosafety and biosecurity, laboratory diagnostics for CBPP, risk communication and bioinformatics.

WOAH has continued to strengthen its cooperation with security partners, notably the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). The two organisations are working on the operationalisation of their memorandum of understanding aiming to identify opportunities to foster collaboration between Veterinary Services and Law Enforcement to tackle shared threats. Recognising the growing threats of misinformation and disinformation affecting the work of Veterinary Services, WOAAH and INTERPOL published [Guidelines on Countering disinformation and misinformation in animal health emergencies](#). These Guidelines provide a foundation for Veterinary Services, in partnership with other sectors, to prepare for, detect and respond to such challenges. Additionally, WOAAH and INTERPOL are working to enhance information sharing between the two organisations and are jointly developing an agro-crime roadmap to guide national-level cooperation between Law Enforcement and Veterinary Services.

In 2024, WOAAH commenced planning for the 3rd WOAAH Global Conference on Biological Threat Reduction, scheduled to take place in Geneva, Switzerland, on 28-30 October 2025. The Conference will address the dynamic landscape of biological threats by reflecting on historical experiences, discussing current challenges and anticipating future risks. Bringing together participants from diverse sectors, it aims to catalyse actionable commitments and strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration to tackle biological threats. The Conference is supported by Global Affairs Canada's Weapons Threat Reduction Program, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign

Affairs, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) of the United States Department of Defense, the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence and the European Union.

WOAH has continued to be a leader and voice for animal health in the global dialogue on biological threat reduction, such as through participation in meetings of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (the [Global Partnership](#)) and the Working Group on the strengthening of the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention.

## **2.5. International collaboration**

### **2.5.1 Scientific networks**

#### **2.5.1.1 Science system**

Access to the best available science is critical to WOA's missions and is embedded in WOA's strategies. One of the goals of WOA's 7th Strategic Plan is to leverage scientific expertise to address multisectoral animal health and welfare issues to develop international animal health policy that is supported by science.

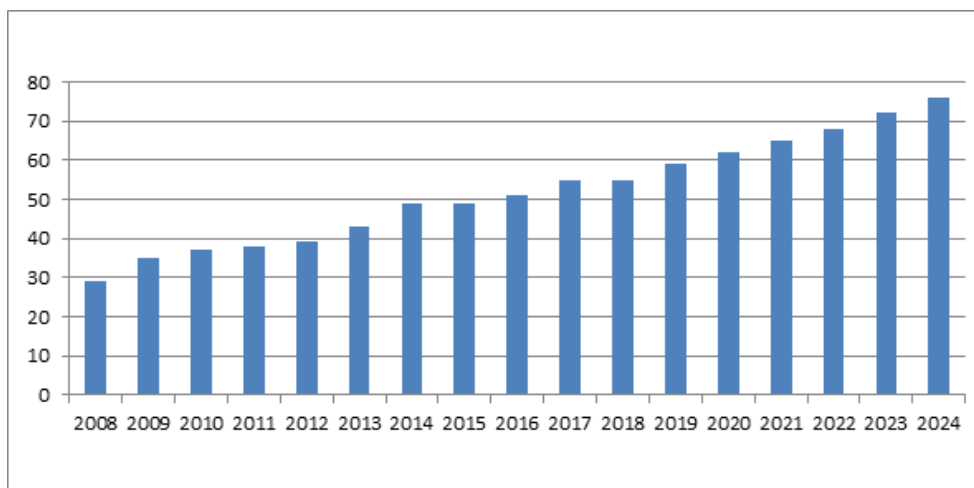
To enhance confidence in WOA's processes related to its core mandates, increase the associated understanding of Members and other stakeholders, and for business continuity within WOA, a project was undertaken to describe the structure and functioning of WOA's Science System. In July 2024, WOA published a [document](#) illustrating the mechanisms by which WOA leverages science and uses its scientific network to ensure that its recommendations and technical outputs are based on the latest science, aligned with best practices and optimised to support WOA's missions. The description of the WOA Science System is informing the work of revising the WOA Basic Texts, in particular with regard to the technical governance of the Organisation.

#### **2.5.1.2 Collaborating Centres**

In 2024, four new Collaborating Centres were designated by the Assembly, bringing the total number of WOA Collaborating Centres to 76 (Figure 16).

The following new WOA Collaborating Centres were approved:

- Fish Health Management in the Middle East Region, Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research (CLAR), Sharkia, Egypt;
- Reference Materials of Molecular Diagnostic Techniques in Aquatic and Terrestrial Animal Diseases, The National Institute of Fisheries Science, NIFS (under the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, MOF) and the Animal and Plant Quarantine Agency (under the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, MAFRA), Korea (Rep. of);
- Field Epidemiology, Centre National de Veille Zoosanitaire (CNVZ), Tunis, Tunisia;
- Genome Monitoring of Swine Viral Disease, National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF), Manhattan, Kansas, United States of America.



**Figure 16.** *Number of Collaborating Centres*

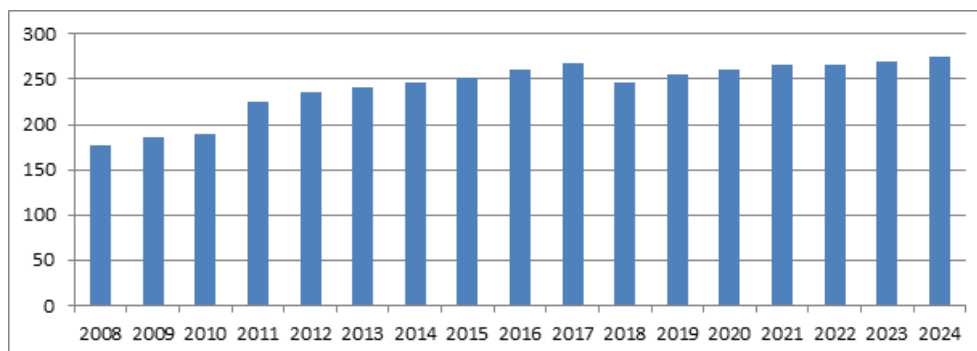
The list of WOAHA Collaborating Centres is available [online](#).

### **2.5.1.3 Reference Laboratories**

In 2024, eight new applications for WOAHA Reference Laboratory status were approved, and four Reference Laboratories withdrew from the list. This brought the total number of WOAHA Reference Laboratories to 274 (Figure 17).

The following new WOAHA Reference Laboratories were approved:

- Sheep pox and goat pox, Exotic and vector-borne diseases (EXOVEC), Department of infectious diseases in animals, Sciensano, Uccle, Belgium;
- Rabies, Veterinary Research Institute, Ministry of Agriculture, New Taipei City, Chinese Taipei;
- Rabies, Laboratory for Emerging Viral Zoonoses, Research and Innovation Department, Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale Delle Venezie, Legnaro (PD), Italy;
- Tularemia, Institute for Bacterial Infections and Zoonoses, Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut (FLI), Jena, Germany;
- Leptospirosis, Livestock Disease Diagnosis Laboratory, Indian Council of Agricultural Research-National Institute of Veterinary Epidemiology and Disease Informatics (ICAR-NIVEDI), Karnataka, India;
- Peste des petits ruminants, Livestock Disease Diagnosis Laboratory, Indian Council of Agricultural Research-National Institute of Veterinary Epidemiology and Disease Informatics (ICAR-NIVEDI), Karnataka, India;
- Salmonellosis, Central Veterinary Laboratory, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, Windhoek, Namibia;
- Theileriosis, Epidemiology, Parasites and Vectors, Agricultural Research Council, Onderstepoort Veterinary Research, South Africa.



**Figure 17.** *Number of Reference Laboratories*

Note: In 2011, WOAHA Headquarters adopted a new way of counting Reference Laboratories. Previously, laboratories designated for a number of related diseases were counted as one laboratory; since 2011, each laboratory has been designated individually for a single disease and this partly accounts for the apparent large increase between 2010 and 2011.

The list of WOAHA Reference Laboratories is available [online](#).

#### **2.5.1.4 STAR-IDAZ**

The Strategic Alliances for the Coordination of Research on the Major Infectious Diseases of Animals and Zoonoses, International Research Consortium ([STAR-IDAZ IRC](#)), is a key player in global efforts to address animal health challenges through enhancing research collaboration on animal health. WOAHA is a member of the Consortium’s Executive Committee and co-hosts the STAR-IDAZ Secretariat (SIRCAH II).

In 2024, STAR-IDAZ expanded its network with new partners, each bringing their unique expertise, including the [International Development Research Centre](#) (IDRC - Canada) and the [Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines](#) (GALVmed).

The Consortium’s main initiatives in 2024 included facilitating shared information on [High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza \(HPAI\) research in mammals](#) as well as developing research roadmaps on [Vector Transmission Control](#), [Tuberculosis](#) and [Coronavirus](#), to close gaps in diagnostics, vaccines, and control strategies. The [2024 State of the Art Report](#) was published to provide a comprehensive overview of progress across ten research areas.

Moreover, STAR-IDAZ collaborated with the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness (GloPID-R) to release [‘Mapping One Health: An Exploration of the Global Funding Landscape for One Health Research’](#).

Through these multifaceted efforts, STAR-IDAZ strengthens international collaborations, advancing critical research for animal health and global One Health outcomes. Research funders and programme owners worldwide wishing to play a role in advancing disease control tools and strategies are invited to [join forces](#) with STAR-IDAZ IRC.

#### **2.5.2 Other networks**

- **REMESA**

In collaboration with the Joint FAO/WOAH Secretariat (based in Tunis, Tunisia) and the co-presidency of Portugal and Morocco, the 28th and 29th Joint Permanent Committee (JPC) meetings of REMESA, the Mediterranean Animal Health Network, were held respectively in Lisbon, Portugal, on 4-5 July 2024 and in Marrakesh, Morocco, on 9-10 January 2025 (meeting on the second part of 2024, initially scheduled in December 2024).



The JPC meetings provided a valuable opportunity for REMESA member countries to strengthen their relationships and engage in discussions on key issues. The meetings served as a platform for member countries to share updates on the activities and initiatives underway, as well as to inform one another on the major epidemiological events that have occurred over the previous six months. Participants provided an update on the animal diseases situation in their countries and highlighted the importance of coordination between countries for the fight against diseases, especially transboundary and zoonotic diseases. The governance of REMESA and the functioning of the Scientific and Technical Office of REMESA (STOR) in Palermo, Italy, was also discussed. The governance discussion in Marrakesh was supported by the results of a questionnaire sent to members.

In 2024, STOR organised for members, two webinars (Aquaculture; Surveillance and diagnostic of prion diseases), one online intensive course (animal welfare in animal trade), two face-to-face training courses (Entomological surveillance; Differential diagnosis and slaughterhouse surveillance).

#### ▪ **CAMENET**

The United Nations declared 2024 as the International Year of Camelids. WOAHA closely collaborates with the Camel Middle East Network (CAMENET). The work plan for 2024 focussed on research, training and qualification to improve camel health in the Middle East region and neighbouring countries and reducing the impact of camel diseases on human health under the One Health approach.

The WOAHA Subregional Representation for the Arabian Gulf, in collaboration with the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), organised an international conference entitled 'Camels health, environmental sustainability and food security', which was held in Kuwait in September 2024. The private and public sector agreed to strengthen national veterinary capacities to address camel-specific health issues, including zoonotic diseases, to enhance the sustainability of the sector and its role in achieving food security.

#### ▪ **AQMENET**

A virtual technical committee meeting was held on 25 March 2024. The members of AQMENET discussed the implementation of the work plan, starting with the aquatic animal health assessment questionnaire (diseases, available guidelines, preparedness/contingency plans). The new Aquatic Reference Centre Network and the benefits of using the WOAHA PVS Aquatic Tool were presented to the members.

### **2.5.3 Technical Partnerships**

#### ▪ **European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD)**

The collaboration with EuFMD continues to be crucial for enhancing Members' capacity in FMD control. Work done so far for the Progressive Control Pathway for FMD (PCP-FMD) toolkit has enriched the activities and certainly assisted endemic countries in their progression for the control and eradication of this disease. The continuous support to the work of the FMD Working Group (FMD-WG) and PSO system strengthens its activities and results, as well as the support to the FMD global surveillance.

Through the EuFMD Executive Committee meetings, WOAHA has played a strategic role in coordination of its activities and the Commission's work plan to better synergise activities on common objectives, as EuFMD continues its reflection on the prioritisation of its activities.

EuFMD's e-learning tools have significantly supported the GF-TADs programme's capacity-building activities, particularly in Africa, Europe and the Middle East, by providing continuous training for Members' Veterinary Services in FMD surveillance and diagnostics. Additionally, WOAHA plans to collaborate closely with EuFMD to strengthen Members' capacity regarding FMD standards and safe trade, emergency reserves and the long-term sustainability of FAO-WOAHA laboratory networks, enhance their understanding of the benefits of FMD control, and prioritise their control efforts.

#### ▪ **Codex Alimentarius Commission**

WOAH and the Codex Alimentarius Commission regularly participate in each other's standard-setting activities, as relevant, to ensure an integrated approach to standard setting for the entire food chain. In 2024, WOAHA continued to monitor the work of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene, the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems and the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods and provided an update on relevant WOAHA activities to each of these Committees.

#### ▪ **International Air Transport Association**

WOAH has been actively engaged with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) for the past 18 years, having been a member of the IATA Live Animals and Perishables Board (LAPB) since 2006 and has had a Collaboration Agreement with IATA since 2008.

An important aspect of WOAHA's participation in the LAPB is to ensure harmonisation between WOAHA standards on animal welfare and transport by air and the IATA Live Animal Regulations, given IATA's role in the transport of animals by air.

#### ▪ **International Horse Sports Confederation (IHSC)**

WOAH continues its engagement in a public-private partnership with the International Horse Sports Confederation (IHSC) to facilitate the safe international movement of sports horses for competitions. Under this partnership, numerous activities are coordinated to update relevant standards, improve communication and raise awareness.

In 2024, three WOAHA-IHSC technical committee meetings were held to monitor progress on projects related to equine diseases, including the development of African horse sickness (AHS) vaccines, advancements in glanders testing and the facilitation of safe international movement of high health, high performance (HHP) horses.

Collaboration between the IHSC and various WOAHA Representations has continued to inform and increase the capacity of Members. Some key achievements include:

- Following the development of a common protocol and draft veterinary certificate, aligned with WOAHA standards and the HHP framework, a harmonised sanitary import protocol and health certificate for competition horses within Mercosur and the Andean Community is scheduled for testing at a horse sporting event in 2025.
- A capacity-building project led by the WOAHA Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific conducted three webinars in 2024, along with workshops in Thailand (January) and in Japan (September), with IHSC experts' contribution.
- A workshop in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, in March 2024 addressed challenges related to horse movement within Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

IHSC experts have been actively involved in revising *Terrestrial Code* chapters on equine diseases, such as *Trypanosoma evansi* (adopted in May 2024), *Trypanosoma equiperdum* (dourine), Eastern and Western equine encephalomyelitis and Japanese encephalitis.

Building on the success of this partnership, WOAHA and the IHSC are set to sign the third Collaboration Agreement, for the period 2025–2029, which will focus on: i) Testing and refining harmonised import certificates and protocols through real-world applications at equestrian events, ii) Promoting the use of digital tools, including electronic horse passports, and iii) Integrating climate change considerations into disease prevention strategies, particularly for vector-borne diseases.

This ongoing collaboration underscores a shared commitment to improving the health, movement and welfare of sports horses worldwide.

- **World Customs Organization**

WOAH has continued to monitor relevant meetings of the World Customs Organization (WCO) to ensure cross-border collaboration between the WCO and sanitary and phytosanitary standard-setting agencies at international and national levels. WOAHA also monitored the meeting of the WCO Counterfeiting and Piracy Group, with a view to strengthening collaboration on the reporting of substandard and falsified veterinary medicinal products as part of WOAHA's pilot project on this theme.

- **WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

In its capacity as an international organisation having observer status for meetings of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee), WOAHA participated in the 88th, 89th and 90th regular meetings of the SPS Committee, as well as in SPS Thematic workshops and the 2024 SPS Transparency Champions Course.

Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF)

In its capacity as a founding partner of the WTO Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), WOAHA participated in numerous STDF Working Group activities during 2024, including contributions to the development of the 2025–2030 STDF Strategic Plan. WOAHA also participated in several of the STDF Practitioner Groups convened throughout 2024.

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## 3. OVERVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

### 3.1. Institutional Governance

#### 3.1.1 Activities of the statutory bodies

##### 3.1.1.1 *World Assembly of Delegates*

The 91st General Session of the World Assembly of Delegates of WOAAH was held in Paris, France, from 26 to 30 May 2024. This session marked the 100th anniversary of the Organisation's founding and was chaired by Dr Hugo Federico Idoyaga Benítez (Paraguay), President of the Assembly.

The [Final Report](#) is available on the WOAAH Website.

#### **Key figures**

- 152 Members participated in the General Session in person.
- Observers from 4 non-member countries and representatives from 30 international and regional organisations attended.
- 20 Guests of Honour, including Ministers and senior representatives of multilateral institutions, participated in the Opening Ceremony.

As in previous years, pre-General Session Information Webinars were held in April 2024 to inform Members about key agenda items and standards proposed for adoption.

#### **Election of the Director General and Council Members**

A major highlight of the session was the election of the new Director General for a five-year term. Following a voting process:

- Dr Emmanuelle Soubeyran (France) was elected as Director General.
- Dr Susana Guedes Pombo (Portugal) was elected as President of the Assembly.
- Dr Fajer Al Salloom (Bahrain) was elected as Vice-President of the Assembly.
- Elections were also conducted for the other Council Members, Bureaux of the Regional Commissions, and Specialist Commissions.

#### **Key Discussions and Resolutions**

The Assembly reviewed and adopted numerous administrative and technical resolutions, covering topics such as:

- Animal health status recognition: Approval of official statuses for Foot and Mouth Disease, Peste des Petits Ruminants, and other priority diseases.
- WOAAH's strategic direction: Adoption of the revision of the Basic Texts to enhance governance and adaptability to future challenges.
- Antimicrobial resistance: Approval of the revised WOAAH List of Antimicrobial Agents of Veterinary Importance.
- Wildlife health initiatives: Enhanced collaborations with partners such as IUCN and CITES for improved surveillance and disease monitoring.
- A total of 72 standards adopted or revised in the field of terrestrial and aquatic animal disease prevention and control, animal welfare, diagnostic methods and vaccine quality.

### **Forum: Is WOAAH Ready for the Future?**

A dedicated Forum was held to explore WOAAH's readiness for future challenges, building on the Organisation's 100-year legacy. Discussions focused on:

- Governance adaptability to changing global health landscapes.
- Strategic foresight and revising institutional frameworks.
- Engagement with younger professionals and diverse stakeholder groups.

### **Financial and Budgetary Decisions**

- The 2023 Financial Report was approved.
- Adjustments to the 2024 Budgeted Work Programme were endorsed.
- The 2025 Regular Budget and Income Estimates were adopted, ensuring continued support for WOAAH's global mission.

### **Recognition and Awards**

- The WOAAH Photo Competition winners were announced across various categories.
- Honorary Awards were presented to veterinary professionals for outstanding contributions to WOAAH's mission.

#### **3.1.1.2 Council**

Due to the elections held during the 91<sup>st</sup> General Session, 2024 marked a transition in the presidency of the Council. The Council convened five times in 2024;

Under the presidency of Dr Hugo Idoyaga:

- on 21 February (virtual), from 5 to 8 March (face-to-face in Paris), and on 23-24 May (face-to-face in Paris)

Under the presidency of Dr Susana Pombo

- from 8 to 10 October (face-to-face in Paris), and on 6 December (virtual meeting).

The February meeting focussed on the validation, by the Council, of the Executive Summary of the "Report on the analysis and evaluation of the institutional, technical and financial governance of WOAAH" to be proposed as a working document for the 91<sup>st</sup> General Session (91GS Adm-13). The Council also validated the related resolution on the Revision of the WOAAH Basic Texts.

During its March meeting, the Council supported the preparation of the 91st General Session (2024), validated its programme, reviewed administrative and technical working documents, and approved logistical arrangements to ensure its smooth running. The Council notably discussed the centenary celebrations of WOAAH, the importance of fostering transparency in the upcoming elections of the Director General, and the need to update the Basic Texts to reflect the evolving role of the Organisation. A decision was made to conduct the election of the Director General using paper ballots, while other elections would be conducted electronically. The Council also approved the extension of the 7th Strategic Plan by one year to allow sufficient time for drafting the 8th Strategic Plan.

At its May meeting, the Council finalized preparations for the 91st General Session, which took place in the context of WOAAH's centenary celebrations. The Council reviewed logistical arrangements for the elections of key governance positions, assessed the financial status of Members eligible to vote, and provided final guidance on resolutions to be presented during the General Session. The Council also reviewed financial governance matters, including statutory contributions and arrears, and discussed strategies to increase Member engagement.

The October meeting focused on strategic and governance matters, including the implementation of the 7th Strategic Plan and the initial discussions on the 8th Strategic Plan, which is expected to be adopted in May 2026. The Council also reviewed key institutional projects such as the revision of WOA's Basic Texts, the Organisation's financial governance and the digital transformation strategy. The Council actively supported the finalisation of the Terms of Reference of the Governance Review Committee. Additionally, discussions covered the importance of sustaining WOA's financial stability, the benefits of WOA membership, and ongoing work on improving the electronic voting platform after technical issues were encountered during the 91st General Session.

During the December virtual meeting, the Council endorsed nominations to the newly established WOA Governance Review Committee, aimed at enhancing regional engagement in WOA's decision-making. The Council also reviewed follow-up actions on the electronic voting platform and assessed improvements made to its reliability for future elections. Additionally, the Council provided final guidance on the continued collaboration with UK Engage for electronic voting and emphasised the need for rigorous testing before the 92nd General Session.

WOA regularly encouraged its Council members to engage with Members at the regional level. In addition to their participation in key events in their respective regions, the Council members maintained regular contact with Delegates to prepare for and report on Council meetings and to consult them on relevant issues, notably through Regional Core Group (RCG) meetings. These informal consultations continue to support the effective implementation of WOA's strategic initiatives.

More information regarding the activities of the WOA Council can be found in document 92 GS/Adm-12. The minutes of the Council meetings are published on the WOA Delegate Portal.

### **3.1.1.3 Regional Commissions**

The five Regional Commissions of WOA are represented by their respective Bureaux, which are institutional elected bodies and key actors in the work of the Organisation. The Bureau of a Regional Commission acts as a bridge between WOA and the Members in that region. The Bureaux exercise an advisory role by ensuring that regional needs are well communicated to and addressed by the Organisation. The role and internal rules of the Regional Commissions and their Bureaux are available in their Terms of Reference.

The Regional Commissions meet every two years to address animal health, animal welfare and animal production food safety issues within their respective regions. These conferences provide a platform for Delegates to discuss national and regional priorities as well as key strategies that will shape the future of the Organisation. In 2024, two face-to-face conferences were successfully organised: the 31st Conference of the Regional Commission for Europe, held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from 30 September to 4 October, and the 27th Conference of the Regional Commission for the Americas, held in Quito, Ecuador, from 25 to 29 November.

Both conferences addressed key regional issues through a comprehensive agenda developed in collaboration with the relevant Regional Core Group. Both conferences provided an opportunity for the Director General to review the main activities and services provided by WOA to its Members, the challenges faced and the future activities to be undertaken to better support Members. They also allowed the Director General to get closer to the regions concerned, to better understand each region's specific situation and to gain valuable insight into regional needs and Members' expectations. Discussions also included the two main technical items, which enabled each Regional Commission to adopt recommendations to be submitted to the Assembly for endorsement at the 92nd General Session, in May 2025.

The final reports of these two conferences are available on the respective regional websites ([Europe](#) and the [Americas](#)).



Attendance at the two conferences was excellent. The Europe Conference had a total of 146 participants, including WOAHA Delegates and representatives from 32 Members of the Region, and senior officials from eight regional and international organisations. The Americas Conference had a total of 95 participants, including WOAHA Delegates and representatives from 23 Members of the Region, and senior officials from 11 regional and international organisations. At each conference, representatives of the private sector and private veterinary organisations from the Region and the host country were also present.

Finally, in 2024, as every year, WOAHA organised the meetings of the Regional Commissions in the framework of the General Session. For each Regional Commission, there were two meetings, the first in a virtual format, two weeks before the 91st General Session, and the second in a face-to-face format on the Monday of the General Session. The purpose of these meetings is to facilitate the preparation of the Regional Commissions for the General Session and to discuss internal matters, such as selection of candidates for the elections, selection of technical items, planning of activities, among others.

### **3.1.2 Activities of the Regional Core Groups**

To better facilitate communication within the region and better support the work of the Regional Commission, a Regional Core Group (RCG) was initially established by the Regional Commission for Asia and the Pacific in 2011. The Regional Commission for Europe subsequently adapted its own internal communication process (initially named Regional Task Force) with a similar approach and renamed it RCG in 2017. In a given region, the RCG is composed primarily of the four members of the Bureau of the Regional Commission and the members of the Council representing that region (in some regions the RCG includes additional observers).

In 2018, WOAHA developed guidelines based on the internal rules and operational processes of the RCGs of Asia and the Pacific and Europe. These guidelines served as a reference for Africa, which started implementing the same communication mechanism in 2018, while the Middle East established its RCG in 2021 and the Americas region, which had been managing its internal communication in a similar way, officialised it as the RCG during its Regional Conference in 2022 to harmonise the approach across all regions.

The main tasks of the RCG are to better link and coordinate the work of the Bureau, the Council and WOAHA (at regional and Headquarters levels) in order to better address regional needs and facilitate regional inputs to the work of the Organisation.

Since the establishment of this communication mechanism, there has been a noticeable improvement in intra-regional communication, with the formalisation of internal communication between the members of the Bureau of the Regional Commission and the corresponding regional members of the Council. WOAHA Members have become more actively involved in the development of agendas for conferences and meetings of their respective Regional Commissions. The involvement of Members ensures that the topics included in the agendas are in line with regional needs and expectations. A common item included in these agendas during 2024 was the active participation of Members in the standard-setting process, not only by commenting on, but also by discussing potential topics of regional interest and priority for the Specialist Commissions to consider in their work plan.

In addition, the RCG has become a space for dialogue that enables Regional Commissions to prepare their participation in key events such as the General Session; facilitates discussions on issues of regional interest, including decisions taken at the regional level, and the submission of proposals, requests or feedback to WOAHA; and strengthens relationships within the region, including with WOAHA regional and sub-regional offices and headquarters, ensuring more coordinated and inclusive work.

Finally, this communication mechanism also facilitates the prioritisation of activities to better support the work of the Regional Commission in line with the WOAHP Strategic Plan and regional needs, including facilitating the implementation of global strategies and/or targeted activities at the regional level in a way that is better adapted to regional specificities. A common need highlighted by all regions in 2024 was the urgent need to increase the visibility of the Veterinary Services, their leadership in animal health, the relevance of their work and their key contribution to global health.

### **3.1.3 Relations with Members**

Since June 2024, the WOAHP Directorate has had the opportunity to engage directly with representatives of WOAHP Members on several key occasions. These included the Regional Conferences in Uzbekistan, Ecuador and Ethiopia, as well as other important meetings, such as the High-Level Forum on Pastoralism in Nouakchott, Mauritania. These meetings provided a valuable platform to discuss regional priorities, current challenges and opportunities for cooperation.

These opportunities for mutual cooperation and direct discussions with Members on their needs and expectations also enabled the WOAHP Directorate to hold bilateral meetings with Ministers and/or Secretaries of State of Mexico, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, Senegal, Uzbekistan, Ecuador, Uganda, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Chad. Discussions were also held with representatives of the embassies of Lebanon, Italy, Russia, and Tunisia. These high-level meetings reaffirmed WOAHP's commitment to working closely with national authorities to support Veterinary Services, strengthen animal health policies and enhance global disease prevention and control efforts.

At the regional level, WOAHP's Regional and Subregional Representatives also actively engaged with Members during events organised in their respective regions. These interactions allowed them to gain a deeper insight into the specific needs and expectations of their respective regions, encouraging closer cooperation and active involvement of Members in WOAHP activities.

These encounters are essential to WOAHP's work, enabling direct dialogue with Members and ensuring that WOAHP's activities and strategic priorities remain relevant and responsive to their needs. They help to strengthen relationships, build trust and facilitate knowledge sharing between national authorities, WOAHP leadership and regional representatives. Such engagement also reinforces WOAHP's role as a key partner in assisting Members to achieve sustainable improvements in animal health and welfare and to strengthen Veterinary Services, including recognition of their key role in global health.

### **3.1.4 Agreements**

The Organisation renewed its Memoranda of Understanding with each of the following: the African Union-Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

### **3.1.5 Analysis and evaluation of WOAHP's institutional, technical and financial governance**

WOAHP commissioned an external review of its institutional, technical and financial governance, which was conducted at the end of 2023 and the beginning of 2024. The external review assessed whether the WOAHP Basic Texts were fit-for-purpose and capable of supporting an efficient, effective and sustainable Organisation into the future.

Following the submission of the executive summary of the report on the external review ('Consultants' Report') as a working document ([91GS/Adm-13](#)), the Assembly unanimously adopted Resolution No. 12 of 2024 at the 91st General Session and requested that the Director General establish a "dedicated group on governance to carry out further work to revise the WOAHP Basic Texts". Resolution No. 12 further directed the Director General, together with the Council, to develop Terms of Reference for the group to be established that govern its structure and composition and its modalities of work.

At its October 2024 meeting, the Council supported the proposal to name the dedicated group on governance the Governance Review Committee (the Committee) and provided input on the draft Terms of Reference. It was established that the Committee would be composed of sixteen (16) WOAHA Members distributed across the five WOAHA regions commensurate to each region's size. The Director General, with the support of the Council, finalised the Terms of Reference and subsequently shared the Terms of Reference with all WOAHA Delegates.

To further involve WOAHA Members in the work of the Committee, the Director General conducted a call for nominations to the Governance Review Committee in October to December 2024. The nominations process was led by the Regional Commissions, via the Bureaux, to identify WOAHA Members to participate on the Committee. The Council approved the membership of the Committee and the Committee was established in December 2024.

The mandate of the Governance Review Committee is to develop consensus advice for the Assembly on the recommendations contained in the Consultants' Report as well as any other governance recommendations it may wish to bring to the Assembly's attention. To fulfil this mandate, the Governance Review Committee will: (1) establish a work programme for its activities (to be presented to the Assembly at the 92nd General Session in 2025); (2) assess and develop advice on changes to WOAHA's governance arrangements (to be presented to the Assembly at the 93rd General Session in 2026); and (3) prepare changes to WOAHA's legal texts based on the Assembly's decision at the 93rd General Session (to be presented to the Assembly at the 94th General Session in 2027).

The Legal Affairs Unit has provided legal and secretariat services to establish the Governance Review Committee, including the development of its Terms of Reference, and will continue to support the Committee and its mandate.

## **3.2. General Administration**

### **3.2.1 Human Resources**

A process aimed at modernising human resources has been underway since mid-2024. This stems from a desire to bring the Organisation into line with other comparable international organisations in terms of management and to make the administrative procedures more secure. The operative words of this procedure are transparency, rigour and efficacy, as well as dialogue, communication and inclusion.

#### **a. Modernisation process**

Within the framework of this process are the new measures regarding recruitment and probationary periods. By standardising panels and creating reserve lists (making available a pool of candidates for subsequent recruitments), the Organisation gains in transparency and efficacy. By precisely documenting what is required during probationary periods, the Organisation adapts to normal professional standards, offering greater clarity for new members of staff and strengthening the tools available to managers.

Over and above these examples successfully completed in 2024, the Director General, at the start of her term, asked the Human Resources Unit to energetically tackle some major reorganisation projects. The Organisation is thus expected to make substantial progress in three major directions: establishment of a classification of posts, computerisation of human resources and reflections on our insurance cover. These projects will need to progress without further delay, relying on enhanced competencies within the teams and a solid network of support within other international organisations.

In 2024, the Human Resources Unit also undertook to identify the various innovations sought by the different regions. This work has been vigorously carried out and revealed a desire for greater homogeneity, which in time would allow a move towards greater internal mobility.

The improvements already initiated include the overhaul of onboarding for new staff members and the adaptation of performance measurement processes. Taken together, this should enable us, within a reasonable timeframe, to consolidate an HR management policy framework that is in line with the times, with staff expectations and with those of our constituents.

## **b. Quantified data**

On 31 December 2024, the Organisation had 264 staff members, 172 of whom worked at Headquarters and 92 in the Regional and Subregional Representations. Seventy-one nationalities were represented among WOAAH staff: 54 at Headquarters and 39 in the Regional and Subregional Representations. Women constituted 57% of all WOAAH's staff; the corresponding proportion at Headquarters was 65%.

Training actions organised in 2024 were aimed at strengthening technical competencies (in budgetary terms, accounting for 40% of all training actions), linguistic competencies (accounting for 34%), other training actions implemented to develop non-technical competencies (accounting for 12%) and lastly training actions and events relating to work safety (each accounting for 1%). In addition, other staff development actions were organised, such as technical certificates to certify staff members' expertise in their particular field. Finally, internal referents received training to create a staff group to support their colleagues, within the framework of the action plan for quality of work life.

The training effort to support the continuous evolution of the Organisation remained substantial, representing a total of 2041 hours of training, including approximately 1585 hours of language courses in which 82 staff members were enrolled in 2024 (42 staff members for French courses, 19 staff members for English courses, and 21 staff members for Spanish courses), and 456 hours of theme-based training, which benefitted 148 staff members. In total, 56% of the Organisation's staff benefitted from training in 2024.

### **3.2.2 Gender**

As a result of the Gender Task Force (GTF) initiatives of past two years, WOAAH secured a Gates Foundation Grant to fund two gender-dedicated roles (Strategic and Technical) for four years. The primary objective is to assist WOAAH in developing and implementing a gender mainstreaming (GM) strategy. The grant is part of the Sustaining Action for Gender Equality (SAGE) programme, which also supports the creation of a Community of Practice (CoP) on GM. This CoP offers an opportunity to explore potential partnerships and collaboration with various organisations, including SEBI, LD4D (Livestock Data for Decisions), civil society groups, think tanks, research institutions and the other members of the Quadripartite (WHO, FAO, UNEP).

The Gender Strategic Adviser (GSA), who joined WOAAH in October 2024, conducted a scoping exercise involving 60 colleagues across different levels and departments at both Headquarters and regional offices. The findings will serve as a basis for the consultation process with WOAAH staff and Members in 2025.

The GTF led and supported a number of activities in 2024:

As part of the 'Professionalisation of veterinary paraprofessionals' project ([P3V](#)) in Senegal and Togo, WOAAH commissioned a study entitled '[Still a minority : integration of women in the veterinary sector - WOAAH - Africa](#)' to gain a better understanding of the constraints that women and men may face as veterinary paraprofessionals (VPPs). Through this study, led by consultant and gender expert Anne-Francoise Thierry, WOAAH analysed access to initial and continuing training for VPPs and the challenges they face in exercising their profession. Although the number of women working in Veterinary Services in Africa has been increasing for several years, they are still a minority among trained and active staff, with significant differences between men and women in terms of posts held and career opportunities. The study results and recommendations offer a clear vision of the actions needed to improve gender equality in the sector, and clearly identify the different players to enable them to occur.

WOAH launched a study on gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) in Veterinary Services of South-East Asia and the Pacific (SEA) in early 2024, led by the GEDSI expert Dr Sarah Kernot. This work builds on WOAAH's 2023 [Gender Assessment of Veterinary Services in South-East Asia](#), extending the scope to the Pacific Island Countries and Territories, and also including disability and social inclusion. The report of the study can be found here: [Gender equality, disability and social inclusion in Veterinary Services - WOAAH - Asia](#). The report includes a strategic plan for WOAAH on how to operationalise GEDSI across the SEA region. WOAAH's

Regional Representation and Subregional Representation in the region have been working to initiate implementing the study recommendations and have dedicated funding for GEDSI operational work. Among other actions, this will include pilot testing the gender-inclusive PVS Evaluation manual (from the PVS Gender study), and working to make other PVS missions more inclusive.

In March 2024, two GTF members delivered a session in an event called 'Women who Future(s)'. The event was designed to promote and celebrate the work of women engaged in thought-provoking discussions in the future(s) and foresight field. The GTF members designed a session called '[Pivot points in gender mainstreaming – gender awareness in the field of animal health and welfare - YouTube](#)' to explore what might be the requirements or preconditions for implementing gender-inclusive recommendations in an acceptable manner and achieving the desired results of improving gender dynamics and gender inclusion. This session also investigated potential positive or negative consequences of implementing such recommendations. Following this event, an article was submitted to *Compass* magazine, curated by the Association of Professional Futurists.

In 2025, the GSA and the GTF will continue to drive the work on improving data management and integration by working with other WOAAH departments to develop systems for data collection and monitoring related to gender. So far, the data workstream has provided a detailed analysis of inner and outer circles of WOAAH (staff, Delegates, Focal points, etc.) and looked at trends in numbers of men and women over time. The workstream's next important piece of work will consist of defining and generalising the use of a standard policy on data and data management to be able to track attendance at all WOAAH's events.

WOAH is currently revising its Basic Texts relating to its financial, technical and institutional governance; this review will also consider gender dimensions, with the GSA and GTF expected to contribute to this process.

To capitalise on the findings of its regionally focused studies and maintain stakeholders committed to this topic, WOAAH will further explore enabling factors for women within the animal health sector and develop a better understanding of how WOAAH can support Members in this area.

WOAH will build upon its internal and external communications efforts by making use of its recently created Intranet page and blog space of *The Animal Echo*. Ultimately, these internal and external repositories would house all WOAAH's gender-related publications, articles and reports.

WOAH will continue hosting events and participating in meetings that relate to gender mainstreaming efforts such as face-to-face meetings of the SAGE community of practice.

### **3.2.3 General Services**

Throughout 2024, the General Services Unit (GSU) played a crucial role in ensuring the smooth operation and strategic development of the Organisation. Several initiatives were undertaken, with significant progress in real estate management. A tender process led to the selection of the firm Colliers as a strategic partner for project oversight, resulting in the successful completion of the first phase, which focused on the technical and administrative analysis of existing buildings. The following phases, scheduled until March 2025, are expected to deliver strategic real estate recommendations.

To optimise workspaces, collaboration with the DTIS Department allowed for the update of the workstation reference file. This initiative aligns with the Clean Desk Policy, reinforcing both security and efficiency in office environments. Additionally, a comprehensive inventory review was conducted to reduce discrepancies and improve asset tracking. This assessment included zoning analysis, identification of known and unknown shrinkage, and the implementation of an IT-based monitoring system to enhance stock management.



The establishment of new offices in Nairobi, Buenos Aires and Beirut required security audits to ensure compliance with safety protocols. A monthly follow-up of contracts and maintenance operations was implemented, while real-time surveillance was introduced for high-risk sites such as Bamako, Moscow and Beirut.

Since 2016, the Organisation has been committed to an energy-saving policy and, in 2024, further improvements were made, including the renovation of windows, adjustments to heating systems and the installation of advanced mechanical ventilation. In parallel, the Mission Insurance application, launched in 2022, has been enhanced with new features such as real-time chat, improved geolocation and automated alert dissemination, ensuring better efficiency and user experience.

Securing major events remained a top priority, particularly during the General Session. Coordination with law enforcement agencies ensured a seamless and secure event. At the same time, efforts to modernise document management continued with the digitisation of essential files and the development of a structured archiving strategy.

Security remains a major concern, and in 2024, the Unit actively contributed to drafting security procedures and conducting 63 risk assessments. A comprehensive security protocol applicable to all missions is scheduled for publication in 2025, reinforcing the Organisation's commitment to risk prevention. At the same time, extensive infrastructure work was undertaken, including the full renovation of the first floor of the building at 12 rue de Prony, featuring the modernisation of the General Directorate office and the creation of a dedicated nursing room. Several regional offices, including those in Buenos Aires, Nairobi and Beirut, were successfully relocated, while a complete refurbishment was carried out in Astana.

Finally, the Unit managed over 198 events in 2024, alongside numerous maintenance and rephotography interventions.

### **3.2.4 Information systems**

In 2024, WOHAI delivered some key projects linked to the digital transformation of the Organisation, whilst maintaining a high level of service support to its staff.

The Digital Transformation and Information System Department (DTIS) defined and developed its IT project management processes and delivery, with the introduction of core project principles (e.g. a set of core project standard templates) and is working to further develop a standard Project framework for WOHAI so that all business and IT projects align to the same project framework. IT project managers have completed the internationally recognised project framework Prince2 training, with some of the training due to be completed in early 2025.

In addition, some technical and governance achievements included the following:

- The Change control process has been embedded across all our suppliers to ensure both internally and externally that all changes to live platforms are reviewed and approved prior to being applied.
- The Architecture Review board process has been embedded across all our suppliers to ensure all new technical designs or new projects adhere to WOHAI architecture standards.
- Development of the DTIS helpdesk with the recruitment of an IT support desk engineer to further enhance IT support and services to WOHAI staff.
- DTIS has further developed and driven cyber good practices and applied tighter cyber resiliency and controls within WOHAI's Microsoft technology stack, and this has enhanced our Microsoft Secure to a similar industry-wide score standard.
- DTIS has successfully designed, created and tested a Data Architecture model utilising Microsoft Technology, with full production delivery due to start in March 2025; this will underpin WOHAI's ability to derive value from its data assets.



- The Data Architecture model will enable WOAAH to develop and utilise artificial Intelligence.
- DTIS has migrated support and maintenance of its Microsoft environment to the DTIS team with a significant reduction in suppliers' costs and enhanced support and maintenance in our Microsoft environment.

The DTIS Department will continue to support the delivery of WOAAH's digital transformation by ensuring that the underlying infrastructure design provides stability, resilience, security and availability for all WOAAH's business applications.

### **3.2.5 Coordination of events**

WOAH handled multiple events and travel arrangements, in support of WOAAH's activities. In 2024, 1,155 travel arrangements were processed for staff members (406), as well as for consultants, Members' representatives, and experts (749).

Beside the multiple events organised by the different Departments and Representations, two major events were organised in 2024 with the direct support of the Events Coordination Unit:

- The 91st General Session of the World Assembly of Delegates, held in Paris, France, on 26-30 May.
- Continental Conference - Towards a more resilient veterinary workforce for Africa, held in Nairobi, on 26 – 28 November.

### **3.2.6 Communication**

In 2024, WOAAH rolled out several high-profile initiatives, thanks to effective collaboration with technical teams across the Organisation, boosting both positive dynamics and productivity.

#### **100th Anniversary Campaign**

In 2024, WOAAH celebrated its 100th anniversary with a comprehensive campaign. It began with an online event in January, drawing nearly 700 global participants and receiving extensive global media coverage. Positive feedback and good coverage marked the event as a success.

In May, during the General Session, WOAAH released various communication products to commemorate the anniversary. The flagship video, a new storytelling format, was shared widely both within the WOAAH network and externally, achieving over 500,000 views. WOAAH also submitted entries for international awards, including reaching the finals at the prestigious Shorty Awards in New York City, United States of America.

The WOAAH.org website saw significant updates: a dedicated anniversary section received over 60,000 visits with 300 anniversary wishes, while the anniversary reflections page, highlighting key milestones in WOAAH's history, generated over 120,000 visits and 550,000 views across nine accompanying articles.

#### **General Session**

The General Session's communication strategy significantly increased visibility of animal health and welfare issues globally. Compared to 2023, achievements included:

- A 109.1% increase in audience reach.
- A 44% boost in media coverage.
- An 80% rise in website visits.
- A 45% growth in #WOAHGS mentions.

Further opportunities exist in enhancing livestream visibility and content relevance to attract media attention.

## Welcoming the New Director General

To introduce the new Director General, WOAAH executed a strategic communication plan to establish strong leadership visibility. Within three months:

- Emmanuelle Soubeyran and WOAAH appeared in 42,000 digital discussions.
- 143 media coverages in prominent outlets like The Hill, Infobae and Vet Record.
- Social media channels for the Director General gained over 7500 followers, reaching more than 300,000 people.

## Overall Growth

WOAH's visibility and engagement across platforms grew steadily throughout the year. LinkedIn followers increased by 26% to over 130,000 and Instagram followers rose by 67%.

In 2024, WOAAH surpassed its UN peers in the global animal health conversation, accounting for 10% of the digital media dialogue. Our share of voice in animal health jumped by 262% and in animal disease by 109%.

- LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube saw increases in impressions, engagement and followers.
- Post link clicks rose by 36% and video views by 35%.
- Popular topics included information about WOAAH itself, avian influenza and AMR.

Media coverage of WOAAH improved in quantity by nearly 20% from outlets like the BBC, the *New York Times*, and Reuters. Mentions and audience engagement in strategic topics increased by 1203% and 622%, respectively, with leadership in biothreats and animal health overall.

The General Session remained a key driver of communication campaigns, followed by World Days and the anniversary launch. Despite most mentions coming from avian influenza, bluetongue led with 41% versus 40%.

Public website performance improved significantly, with visits up 107%, driven by search engine activity expansion.

## Communication Strategy

WOAH is finalising its Global Communication Strategy set to launch in 2025. This strategy builds on earlier work from 2020 to 2023, including a communication vision document, brand strategy and other strategic documents. In September 2024, under the leadership of the new Director General, the mandate expanded to cover all external communication, ensuring a comprehensive approach across regions and departments. This expansion reflects a commitment to communication in all its forms and at all organisational levels. The new strategy will launch in the first quarter of 2025, also in anticipation of the preparatory work for the 8th Strategic Plan.

### 3.2.7 Legal affairs

WOAH's Legal Affairs Unit plays an important role in ensuring the legal framework of the Organisation's operations and advises the Office of the Director General and all departments/units on a wide range of operational and governance matters, primarily in connection with complex contracts, litigation, procurement and relationships with Members and partners. Legal advice is also provided on issues relating to the Organisation's Basic Texts, privileges and immunities and other institutional matters.

In 2024, the Legal Affairs Unit contributed to several key areas, ranging from the management of the cycle of elections, including the election of the Director General, support to the Organisation's institutional bodies and coordinating the establishment of the Governance Review Committee. In addition, the Legal Affairs Unit contributed to the ongoing negotiations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand regarding a Headquarters Agreement.

### 3.2.8 Performance management and internal control

In 2024, WOAAH reached a key milestone in the consolidation of its performance management and internal control system, by strengthening its processes and further structuring its risk monitoring. The year was marked by the introduction of results-based management tools, more robust internal control governance and greater digitalisation of procedures, illustrating the organisation's ongoing commitment to greater transparency and optimised risk management.

#### 3.2.8.1 Performance management

In 2024, WOAAH strengthened the implementation of the 7<sup>th</sup> Strategic Plan by initiating a transition to results-based management, in particular with the introduction of "OKAPIs" (Organisational Key Accountability and Performance Indicators). This change, detailed in [Section 1](#), is based on the evaluation of Strategic initiatives and Action Cards, enabling a better measurement of the impact of actions taken and a more rigorous structuring of performance monitoring.

#### 3.2.8.2 Internal control

##### Strengthening the internal control system

The arrival of a new Internal Control resource in August 2024 has strengthened the system, enabling more effective follow-up of the recommendations resulting from external audits:

- **Nearly 60% of the recommendations made by external audits over the last 10 years have been implemented**, confirming WOAAH's commitment to continuous improvement, with a particular focus on risk management in the expenditure process.
- More regular monitoring of risks, supported by an updated risk map, has made it possible to identify the key procedures that need to be formalised or revised as a matter of priority, thereby helping to speed up the process of drafting the processes launched in 2024.

A **Quality Manual** was also launched at the end of 2024 to integrate a complementary approach between **internal control and quality**, placing performance and stakeholder satisfaction at the heart of the continuous improvement process. This link between **securing processes and optimising performance** is designed to ensure more effective and resilient governance.

##### Strengthening the governance of the internal control system

In 2024, WOAAH continued to consolidate its internal control framework, ensuring more robust governance and better risk control.

- The Audit Committee held two meetings, in June and December, ensuring closer monitoring of the internal control system.
- In November, the Audit Committee's governance was restructured with the inclusion of all COMEX members, strengthening its alignment with WOAAH's strategic priorities.

- Training for Committee members: in order to strengthen the culture of internal control and risk management, an awareness-raising exercise was carried out to remind members of the foundations of the system implemented since 2021, based on the COSO framework (Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission), one of the reference frameworks for internal control, risk management and governance most widely used internationally to structure and evaluate internal control systems. This system **is based on an integrated and comprehensive approach** to WOH's operational processes.
- The assessment of the internal control system, carried out at the end of 2024 and presented to the Audit Committee, highlighted a significant **increase in the maturity of the system**, from level **1 (in 2021)** to level **3** (out of 5), reflecting improved risk management and strengthened mechanisms.
- The Audit Committee validated the follow-up to the internal audits launched in 2023 (actuarial study, WAHIS project management, data governance and digital transformation), which led to action plans that are currently being implemented, as well as the review of priority risks that led to a revision of the risk control action plans to pursue continuous improvement in 2025.
- In the interests of greater transparency, the Council was briefed in October on the internal control system and the progress of the action plan following the audits of WAHIS, data governance and digital transformation.

### **3.2.8.3 Support for digitisation as part of risk management**

The electronic signature system, which strengthens the security of contracts, has been widely deployed, increasing from fewer **than 100 annual transactions in 2023 to more than 700 in 2024**, now covering procurement, donors' contracts, HR contracts and budget documentation.

A survey on the use of the new budgeting tool, to be deployed in January 2025, was launched in November, with a response rate of almost 80%. This high response rate will enable us to assess user satisfaction and identify ways of optimising the tool to make it more effective.

WOAH is constantly striving for greater transparency and optimisation of its processes, with the aim of achieving ever more rigorous governance, controlling its risks and complying with the requirements of its stakeholders.

## **3.3. Financial management**

### **3.3.1 Budget and financial management**

As of January 2024, WOH began implementing a comprehensive Financial Policy Framework, supported by internal decisions, user guides, standard operating procedures and a digitalised financial and budgetary management tool (Procure to Pay). This tool which is currently operational at Headquarters and in two pilot regional offices (Tokyo and Bangkok), offers several key benefits: (i) digitising commitments and purchase order management; (ii) enabling better monitoring of invoices and facilitating timely payments; (iii) improving budget management; (iv) strengthening financial oversight; and (v) enhancing the Organisation's ability to prepare for and respond efficiently to audits.

The first year of implementation of the financial and budgetary management tool provided an opportunity to train staff, address technical issues, resolve process-related bugs and gather feedback through a user questionnaire to identify areas for future improvement. Further development focused on creating a Project module to complement the existing tool. This new module will allow WOH to monitor grants funded through the World Fund, ensuring more comprehensive oversight of all funding sources and related contractual obligations. The Project module will be made available to WOH relevant staff in 2025.

These efforts demonstrate WOAAH's commitment to enhancing efficiency, transparency and accountability in managing and overseeing the funding received from our Members and resource partners.

### **3.3.2 Budget funding and implementation in 2024**

Please refer to document [92 GS/Fin-01](#) for more detailed information.

WOAH makes use of all sources of funds, including Members' statutory contributions, voluntary contributions from Members and other resource partners and additional sources of revenue, to implement the work programme and implement the 7th Strategic Plan.

The Organisation's budgetary framework comprises three components, each using a specific budgetary structure: the Regular Budget, World Animal Health and Welfare Fund (World Fund) Estimates, and Regional and Subregional Representations Estimates.

#### **— Regular Budget**

The Regular Budget's income primarily consists of statutory contributions from the Organisation's 183 Members, which are used to fund the work programme. These contributions represent the most flexible and predictable source of funding for the Organisation, as they are mandatory dues that Members are required to pay.

Document *92 GS/Fin-01* provides detailed information on the Regular Budget, including analysis through seven key financial performance indicators.

#### **— World Animal Health and Welfare Fund**

WOAH's World Animal Health and Welfare Fund (World Fund) is a multi-donor trust fund collecting voluntary contributions to support the implementation of WOAAH's mandate and Strategic Plans, thereby complementing the Regular Budget. The voluntary contributions are garnered through the execution of grant agreements with Members (in addition to their statutory commitments) as well as international organisations, philanthropic foundations, the private sector and other, diverse funding sources.

A detailed analysis of the World Fund's financial performance is provided in document *92 SG Fin-01*, which includes six standardised key financial performance indicators, enabling a comparative analysis and trend assessment.

In accordance with the Basic Texts, the Director General is supported in overseeing the World Fund by two dedicated committees: the Management Committee and the Advisory Committee, both of which convene annually.

The 17th Meeting of the Management Committee took place at WOAAH Headquarters on 23 May 2024. Chaired by the Past President of WOAAH, the Committee conducted an in-depth review of the World Fund's financial performance and WOAAH's financial sustainability. The Committee approved the submission of the World Fund accounts, which form integral components of documents *91 SG Fin-01*, *91 GS/Fin-04* (2024 Budget), and *91 GS/Fin-05* (2025 Budgeted Work Programme, Income Estimates, and Related Contribution Scale) for endorsement by the Council. These documents were subsequently adopted by the Assembly during the General Session in May 2024.

The 19th Meeting of the Advisory Committee was held in Paris on 27 May 2024, during the 91st WOAAH General Session. Chaired by Dr Hans Wyss, Delegate of Switzerland to WOAAH, the meeting was attended by 36 resource partner representatives. Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the World Fund, the meeting reviewed its financial performance (including a 2023 year-in-review), investment gaps, new resource mobilisation strategies, and reflections on the governance structures of the World Fund. This discussion was informed and stimulated by the results of an external and independent analysis and evaluation of WOAAH's institutional, technical and financial governance, which had been commissioned by WOAAH and shared with WOAAH Members prior to the 91st General Session (see [Section 3.1.5](#)).

These two Committees play a critical role in ensuring the sound management and strategic direction of the World Fund, reinforcing WOA's commitment to transparency, fiscal responsibility and the continued success of its mission.

### — Regional and Subregional Representations

The financial situation of the different Regional and Subregional Representations varies significantly. Their income primarily comes from voluntary contributions from the host country, a portion of the relevant Members' statutory contributions and voluntary grants managed through the World Fund. For some Representations, their financial situation is particularly fragile. Over the past few years, it has become evident that these Representations are highly dependent on the grants made available through the World Fund.

#### **3.3.3 2025 and 2026 Budget planning and implementation**

In line with WOA's ongoing commitment to financial transparency and efficiency, significant efforts were made throughout the year to refine budgetary processes and dialogue. This focus led to the development of key financial documents, namely *92 GS/Fin-04* (2025 Budget) and *92 GS/Fin-05* (2026 Budgeted Work Programme, Income Estimates, and Related Contribution Scale).

#### **3.3.4 Procurement**

Procurement activities at WOA support the implementation of the Organisation's strategic objectives and operational frameworks, while contributing to the financial optimisation and overall efficiency of activities, in compliance with the applicable rules and regulations.

In 2024, 36 projects (procurement contracts and amendments) were launched and managed. Of these, 24 were signed, totalling € 1.8 million. Additionally, a tendering procedure consisting of 2 lots and another with 13 lots was initiated, involving the signing of multiple contracts with varying or uncapped amounts.

A key achievement in 2024 was the implementation of WOA's Financial Policy Framework, which includes the Guide to WOA Procurement Procedures. These new documents outline the procurement rules, explain the implementation of new procedures and thresholds, and introduce new measures to ensure transparency, procedural security, and equality among tenderers.

In 2025, a Procurement training programme will be launched for all WOA staff. This initiative aims to ensure a clear understanding of procurement rules and their consistent implementation.

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