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**Summary of Activities of the Working  
Group on Wildlife for 2024**

Presented by the Chair of the Working Group, Dr William Karesh

*[Technical Working Document]*

# Summary of Activities of the Working Group on Wildlife for 2024

The Chair of the Working Group on Wildlife, Dr William Karesh, presented an overview of the activities of the Working Group since the previous General Session and the outcomes of the annual meetings of the Working Group held from 15th to 18th April 2024 and 12th to 15th November 2024.

The Working Group fulfilled its role in continuing to review key outcomes of the wildlife health programme, to provide technical guidance on selected topics, and to guide on future strategy and programming.

## Collaboration with International Partners

The Working Group remarked on the high number of WOAHP partnerships related to wildlife health and recommended that WOAHP focus on top priority partnerships which best supported outputs and activities identified in the WOAHP Wildlife Health Framework. Key partners include the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Wildlife Disease Association (WDA), the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) (WOAHP collaborates with WCS through the Science for Nature and People Partnership project [SNAPP]).

## Next Generation Wildlife Disease Reporting System

The Working Group expressed its support for the new Generation of a wildlife health information system in WOAHP, and encouraged WOAHP to prioritise this project so that the WOAHP Members can begin to evaluate its ability to support their needs and activities. It also suggested that WOAHP investigate the possibility of developing the data collection system in partnership with an international organisation that specialised in informatics and data management.

## Collaboration with the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (the Code Commission)

The Working Group continued its collaboration with the Code Commission. Together with the Code Commission, the Working Group identified specific chapters in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* which were due to be updated and required input from wildlife experts, either because the epidemiology of a disease involved wildlife, or because the chapter presented opportunities to integrate aspects relating to the improvement of wildlife health. The Working Group developed a generic framework for evaluating the potential impact of wildlife diseases on trade and the economy and tested it using six diseases recommended by WOAHP.

## Diseases and susceptible species

The Working Group recommended WOAHP considers becoming the definitive source of wildlife health information including developing and providing a list of susceptible species that includes validated and suspected host for various diseases and considers new dynamic methods for displaying this information for increased use by Members and other interested parties.

## High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza

The Working Group continued to follow in detail the situation and the impacts of high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) on wild animal populations worldwide. The recent worldwide situation reports on HPAI was presented and discussed. The Working Group noted its contribution to technical communications material which aimed to alert, inform and support countries in facing the current situation.

## Network of Collaborating Centres and of the National Focal Points for Wildlife

The Working Group supported and encouraged the development of the formalised Network of Collaborating Centres working on wildlife health and the network of National Focal Points for wildlife to increase WOAH's ability to serve Members' needs and contribute to advancing WOAH's Wildlife Health Framework.

### **Wildlife Health Framework**

The Working Group was informed on the last updates regarding the Wildlife health Framework, made suggestions and comments for its evaluation, and contributed to a working session for the development of the next one (2026-2030). This included a WOAH Foresight exercise, to which the members of the Working Group contributed by providing inputs on topics of relevance.