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Antimicrobial Resistance Working Group Report

Technical Working Document



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Introduction

The AMR Working Group (AMRWG) was established by WOAAH's Director General, following the adoption of Resolution No. 14, at the 87th General Session. In accordance with its Terms of Reference ([ToR](#)), the AMRWG supports:

- the implementation of [WOAH's AMR and Prudent Use of Antimicrobials Strategy](#)
- the [recommendations](#) from the 2nd WOAAH Global Conference on AMR and Prudent Use of Antimicrobial Agents in Animals.

The AMRWG meets biannually (once in Q1 and once in Q4). When necessary, subgroups and additional *ad hoc* groups are formed to address specific issues requiring specialist knowledge; these groups meet separately to the AMRWG.

The AMRWG currently consists of the below experts:

- Dr Tomoko Ishibashi (Japan) (Chair)
- Ms Barbara Freischem (The Netherlands)
- Dr Stephen Page (Australia)
- Dr Fajer Sabah Al Saloom (Bahrain)
- Dr Carolee Carson (Canada)
- Dr Arshnee Moodley (Kenya)
- Dr Jalusa Deon Kitch (Brazil)

1. Activities of the AMRWG

Dr Tomoko Ishibashi, Chair of the AMRWG, presented an overview of the AMRWG's activities since the 2024 General Session, including the outcomes of its biannual meetings, held between [29-31 October 2024](#) and [1-3 April 2025](#).

1.1 Recruitment

In line with the departures of both Dr Tomoko Ishibashi (in May 2025) and Dr Stephen Page (in October 2025), a [recruitment call](#) was launched in December 2024 for two new AMRWG members from the Asia and the Pacific region. Following a thorough review of applicants by the AMRWG, the AMRWG Secretariat and the Asia and the Pacific regional and sub-regional representation offices, a shortlist of six candidates was presented to the Director General for her consideration. The Director General confirmed at the end of April 2025 that the new members would be Dr Michiko Kawanishi from Japan and Professor Yang Wang from China. In parallel, Director General appointed Dr Arshnee Moodley (Kenya) as the new Chair of the AMRWG.

The new members are expected to join the next AMRWG meeting, which will take place between 30 September and 2 October 2025.

1.2 Revision of Chapter 6.8. of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code

In [September 2024](#), the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (TAHSC) approved the AMRWG's recommendation to update [Chapter 6.8](#). 'Harmonisation of national antimicrobial resistance surveillance and monitoring programmes' (last updated in 2018) of the Terrestrial Code. The TAHSC requested that the AMRWG submit the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the *ad hoc* group responsible for the chapter update to the TAHSC in its [February 2025](#) meeting.

The AMRWG discussed the required expertise and ToR for the *ad hoc* group in its [October 2024](#) meeting and in [February 2025](#), the TAHSC agreed the proposed ToR.

In its [April 2025 meeting](#), the AMRWG decided that Dr Arshnee Moodley will chair and Dr Carolee Carson will be part of the *ad hoc* group - the recruitment call for additional members will take place between late April – end of May 2025 and will target experts from WOAAH's

Collaborating Centres. Appointment of the *ad hoc* group is planned for July 2025 and regular progress reports will be provided to the AMRWG and the TAHSC during its regular meetings.

1.3 *Revision of Chapter 6.2. of the Aquatic Animal Health Code*

In [September 2024](#), the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission (AAHSC) accepted the recommendation made by the AMRWG in its [February 2024](#) meeting to update [Chapter 6.2](#). 'Principles for responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals' of the Aquatic Code. This will be the first update of the chapter since 2011 and will ensure that the chapter reflects current scientific evidence.

In [October 2024](#), the AMRWG provided advice on the gap analysis of section 6 of the Aquatic Animal Health Code, as requested by the AAHSC. In [April 2025](#), the AMRWG decided that Ms Barbara Freischem will be part of the *ad hoc* group responsible for the update of chapter 6.2, alongside experts from WOAAH's Collaborating Centres. The update of the chapter is due to start in June 2025.

1.4 *WOAH Technical Reference Documents for antimicrobial agents of veterinary importance for bovine animals and cats and dogs*

Following the [recommendations](#) of the 2nd OIE Global Congress for AMR and Prudent Use of Antimicrobials in 2018, members of the AMRWG, external experts and WOAAH Collaborating Centres contributed to the development of technical reference documents (TRDs) of antimicrobial agents of veterinary importance for [aquatic species](#), [poultry](#) and [swine](#). These TRDs provide additional, species-specific information, without serving as a treatment guideline and will be used to update the [WOAH List of Antimicrobial Agents of Veterinary Importance](#) (WOAH List).

In [October 2024](#), the AMRWG endorsed the TRDs for [bovine animals](#) and [cats and dogs](#) and requested that WOAAH increased the visibility of both the WOAAH List and TRDs. To help increase visibility of the documents, the AMRWG developed an introductory text to describe their history, purpose and intended audiences, which is displayed alongside the documents on [WOAH's website](#). This includes a description of minor updates subsequently made to the WOAAH List to align with WOAAH's TRDs (poultry, swine, bovine, aquatic animals and cats and dogs).

1.5 *WOAH List of Antimicrobial Agents of Veterinary Importance and Technical Reference Documents – Global Survey*

In [October 2024](#), the AMRWG undertook a brainstorming activity in preparation for the major review of the WOAAH List. An action from this session was the development of a questionnaire which will assess the level of awareness and relevance of the [WOAH List and the TRDs](#). Part of the survey findings will be used to propose a revision of the categorisation criteria of antimicrobials, according to their importance for veterinary medicine of the WOAAH List.

During its [April 2025](#) meeting, the AMRWG provided feedback on the questionnaire and agreed that the survey must be sent to both Delegates and relevant stakeholders. The survey will be launched after WOAAH's General Session in May 2025. Further information regarding the survey will be available at the AMR kiosk. The results of the survey will be discussed at the AMRWG's September 2025 meeting.

1.6 *ANIMUSE Global Database*

[ANIMUSE](#) (the global database on ANIimal antiMicrobial USE), enables country analyses of antimicrobial quantities, animal biomass and adjusted rankings. The AMRWG received updates on key ANIMUSE activities in both its [October 2024](#) and [April 2025](#) meetings.

1.6.1 9th and 10th round data collection

The 9th ANIMUSE report will be published in May 2025, during WOA's 92nd General Session and will present antimicrobial use (AMU) for 2022. During this period, 111 countries provided validated quantitative data; 38 of these countries have public reports. Tetracyclines remain the most used antimicrobial class. Between 2020 and 2022, a 5% global decrease in AMU (mg/kg) was observed, with tetracyclines declining by 26% and penicillins increasing by 18%.

As of 6th March 2025, the 10th round of ANIMUSE collection includes 129 participants (70% of WOA's membership), from which 90% provided data using Reporting Option 3. Participation from Africa continues to decrease, which WOA would like to explore. The number of countries which agreed to be public in ANIMUSE increased from 12 (Dec. 2023) to 48 (March 2025). In its [October 2024](#) meeting, the AMRWG encouraged WOA Members to submit their data publicly with ANIMUSE for transparency and to avoid the risk of biased estimations AMU from mathematical modelling studies. In [April 2025](#), the AMRWG discussed the value of WOA's AMU report writing workshops, which empower countries to understand their own data and take action on AMR, including creating their own AMU reports.

1.6.2 Species level data collection

More than 90 WOA Members have used the ANIMUSE Calculation Module, which reports veterinary product data, with many also including target species information. WOA seeks to enhance data granularity for both AMU (numerator) and animal biomass (denominator). To help meet this objective, a Technical Expert Group (TEG) for AMU was created in 2024 to provide expert guidance on species-level data collection, ensuring that ANIMUSE continues to evolve and improve global AMU monitoring. Dr Carolee Carson represents the AMRWG in the TEG.

The creation of Reporting Option 4 in the global AMU data collection will allow the collection of AMU data stratified by animal species. The Excel and Word documents for AMU data collection at species level will be piloted in a selected number of countries during summer 2025, with the objective to launch reporting Option 4 in September 2026, for the 11th round of ANIMUSE data collection.

In [April 2025](#), the AMRWG advised the ANIMUSE team on how to provide guidance estimating AMU data per species, as methodologies vary amongst countries. The AMRWG recommended that marketing authorisation holders should be targeted instead of wholesalers and that some species data is more reliable than others, e.g. aquaculture is more precise than data on chickens and pigs, where products are often being prescribed for both species in some countries.

1.6.3 Substandard and Falsified Veterinary Products Programme (SFVP)

The Veterinary Surveillance System for Substandard And Falsified Medicines (VSAFE) pilot aims to collect incidents of suspected SFVP by Members to monitor the situation and provide alerts to members with recommendations to prevent, detect and respond to SFVP circulating in countries.

In its [April 2025](#) meeting, the AMRWG was updated on the VSAFE membership; in 2024, 64 Members joined VSAFE (43 Members in 2023), with a significant increase of Members from the Asia and the Pacific Region. The AMRWG provided advice on the inclusion of raw materials, the VSAFE dashboard and the creation of a global alert system.

1.7 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Political Declaration on AMR

1.7.1 79th UNGA commitments for the animal health sector

At its [October 2024](#) meeting, the AMRWG provided feedback to WOAAH on the recommended actions for its Members on the four commitments concerning the animal health sector included in the 79th UNGA political declaration on AMR. These commitments are: 1) reduced quantities of antimicrobials used in animals; 2) prudent and responsible use of antimicrobials in animals; 3) prioritisation of prevention with a focus on animal vaccination strategies and, 4) investment to ensure access to essential veterinary services. Based on the AMRWG feedback, WOAAH has prepared a [guidance leaflet](#) to support its Members in their implementation.

1.7.2 Global Action Plan (GAP) on AMR

In its [April 2025 meeting](#), the AMRWG was informed on the status of the update of the Global Action Plan (GAP) on AMR by the Quadripartite organisations, which is being updated to ensure a multisectoral, One Health approach. Each organisation will run consultations with its own respective Membership; WOAAH will use the AMRWG to facilitate the review and consultation process with WOAAH Members.

1.7.3 VetAWaRe

[Commitment #7](#) from the 4th High-Level Ministerial Conference on AMR held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in November 2024 was to '*Encourage WOAAH 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*'.

To fulfil this commitment, the AMRWG decided in its [April 2025 meeting](#) that a subgroup of the AMRWG could develop and test the methodology for a VetAWaRe List using WOAAH's TRDs, in consultation with external experts and WOAAH's Collaborating Centres. The AMRWG agreed that it will start by developing the categorisation criteria and use these to create the 'VetAWaRe' List for poultry; the methodology will be adapted accordingly to develop lists for other species.

2. Conclusion

WOAH thanks the AMRWG members for their continued commitment to the group and their support in the implementation of WOAAH's Strategy on Antimicrobial Resistance and Prudent Use of Antimicrobials and the recommendations of the 2nd WOAAH global conference on AMR and prudent use of antimicrobials.

In addition to its core roadmap activities planned for 2025 – 2026, the AMRWG will continue to provide support on:

- The [Essential Veterinary Medicine List \(EVML\)](#) being developed by [Brooke](#) and the [World Veterinary Association \(WVA\)](#), for which the AMRWG has provided multiple rounds of comments, most recently in its [April 2025 meeting](#);
- WOAAH's upcoming article on alternatives to antimicrobials and the Technical Experts Group's reflection paper on Autogenous Vaccines (EEG-AV), which the AMRWG provided feedback on in its [April 2025 meeting](#); and
- Chapter 4X of the Terrestrial Code, which will focus on broad principles of biosecurity; the AMRWG were informed on the chapter in its [April 2025 meeting](#) and were offered the possibility to provide comments to the TAHSC secretariat by 4 July 2025.

Further information on the AMRWG and its roadmap of activities can be found here: [Working Group on Antimicrobial Resistance - WOAAH](#).