

September 2025

# WOAH Wildlife Health Framework Evaluation

Final report

**Firetail**



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# 1. Executive summary

## Summary

This evaluation finds the Wildlife Health Framework (WHF) was a timely post-COVID response that formalised wildlife health within WOAAH and raised its profile. Delivery was strongest in training and capacity building, guidelines and standards, and partnerships. There were some challenges that limited the WHF's effectiveness, namely breadth of scope, uneven internal buy-in, and an HQ-led model that impeded country-level uptake, fragmented data and weak reporting incentives, and restricted funding with early capacity gaps. Early signs of the WHF's impact include shifting stakeholders' attitudes and behaviours, and contributions to the highly pathogenic avian influenza response.

Looking ahead, the report recommends a pragmatic pivot: sharpen WHF priorities, shift emphasis from guidance to developing tools to support on-the-ground implementation, streamline and incentivise wildlife data reporting, and reset governance and internal communications to embed wildlife health across WOAAH. Strengthening the financing model and focusing monitoring on uptake and outcomes is key. Building on the first five years, the next phase can convert heightened profile into durable impact, provided the WHF becomes more focused and delivery-oriented.

## Key findings

- **Relevance.** The WHF's formation was a successful response to pandemic-era urgency and long-standing gaps in wildlife health surveillance and guidance. The framework was developed through a highly collaborative process with focuses on developing guidelines and standards, and enhancing multisector coordination and collaboration. Most NFPWs (55%) responded that the WHF had been responsive to Members' changing needs. There was general agreement that the WHF's scope was broad and covered almost all relevant topics, with the exception of upstream prevention.
- **Coherence.** The WHF is well aligned with WOAAH's 7th Strategic Plan (2021-2025) (developed since the WHF), as well as other major WOAAH strategies and programmes. It helped formalise wildlife health within WOAAH's mandate and expanded external standing. Internally, many staff value the direction, but the WHF was often perceived as a "programme on the side", with uneven buy-in and there was often a perceived gap between the WHF's activities and on the ground implementation.
- **Effectiveness.** Across all six outputs, the WHF successfully delivered against most of its planned activities. The NFPWs voted training and capacity building, guidelines and standards development, and information systems (e.g. WAHIS, WAHIS-Wild) as the most useful activities for their work. Interviewees frequently praised the WHF's development of guidelines, promotion of multisectoral collaboration and partnerships, and the way it enhanced awareness of wildlife health issues. There were three drivers of ineffectiveness that were raised consistently: capacity burden on Members, ineffective governance structure, and a lack of internal comms strategy.
- **Efficiency.** Of the 4,342,770 € allocated to WHF activities, around 90% was restricted funding. This was very limiting on what activities the WHF could prioritise and undertake. The four outputs that received the most funding (2, 3, 4, and 6) were also found to be the most effective (this does not include regional projects e.g. SURSYs). Due to limited staff and resources early on, not all funding was disbursed across delivery and there were some grant claim backs. But ,the WHF did become more efficient over the duration of its first phase.
- **Impact.** There was near universal agreement that the WHF has successfully raised WOAAH's profile in the sector, as well as promoting awareness of wildlife health within WOAAH. That said, there was consensus that the framework itself was not universally known nor well understood by wider WOAAH staff. Most NFPWs (52%) noted examples where the WHF had successfully influenced stakeholders' awareness, attitudes, and behaviours, with several pointing to the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) outbreak as the clearest example of its impact.
- **Sustainability.** Whilst not expected at this early stage, there is little evidence of the WHF's long-term sustainability. WOAAH assuming the role of secretariat of the International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade Alliance is seen as a good opportunity to build sustainability over the next few years.

# 1. Executive summary

## Practical recommendations for enhanced delivery of the framework

### 1. Clarify roles of governance and delivery.

- a. **Define governance and roles of the WHF's key groups.** This should involve a re-constitution of the Steering Committee with the inclusion of regional representatives. Position the working group and the CC Network as technical advisers. Establish a quarterly cadence for Steering Committee meetings with a standing agenda (priorities, risks, funding, MEL), and publish a one-page RACI for core tasks.
- b. **Extend the stakeholder mapping to inform WHF delivery.** This should capture: where wildlife authority sits nationally, capacity constraints, existing surveillance assets, and partner footholds. Use the map to target support and select pilot countries or regions for implementation of new WHF initiatives (see below).

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### 2. Set up and deliver clearer communications for the Wildlife Health Framework.

- a. **Embed the WHF across WOAAH.** All future major WOAAH documents and strategies should include a short "wildlife alignment" paragraph, demonstrating how they interact and reinforce each other. WOAAH could also look to reintroduce 'wildlife champions' across the organisation's departments and in key regions.
- b. **Run a continuous light touch internal comms campaign.** Launch a monthly WHF brief delivered through existing Yammer channels, and an intranet hub with tools and a one-page 'wildlife at WOAAH' narrative.

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### 3. Strengthen and establish an overall Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) approach for the WHF.

This should include a small number of outcome-focused metrics to track the delivery and impact of the framework. The introduction of quarterly or biannual learning sessions will provide an opportunity to celebrate wins, support real-time reflection and course correction, and share lessons across the WHF team and the wider organisation.

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### 4. Develop a sustainable funding strategy.

- a. **Conduct donor mapping.** Prioritise donors aligned to each of the priority initiatives (see below), as well as unrestricted/ core funding (where possible). Package 'investable offers', clearly demonstrating outcomes to meet existing and new donors' interests, costs and the return on investment across the WHF's initiatives.
- b. **Build on partnerships and existing positioning.** Leverage WOAAH's Alliance secretariat position to convene fundable workstreams (e.g. market biosecurity, traceability) that deliver WHF priorities. Explore issuing small, output-linked operational grants to CCs to translate guidance into country delivery. Continue to build on existing partnerships, and generally, focus on building on areas where the WHF has made progress.

## Strategic recommendations for enhanced impact of the framework

### 1. Localisation in key regions – to support on the ground implementation.

- a. **Launch practical implementation support programmes.** Pilot a series of WHF implementation programmes, including SOPs, that set out how to translate guidance into field action, that is localised for each region.
- b. **Continue and expand training and capacity building.** Further develop and tailor it for local delivery, continuing current modules whilst adding tailored programmes to cover more specific topics (e.g. diagnostics). Where possible, sessions should be opened up to a wider range of stakeholders.
- c. **Incentivise reporting and develop a regional implementation plan.** Configure NG-WHIS in a way that does not penalise Members for reporting disease cases. The interface should also be as user-friendly and low-friction to use as possible, aligning with existing reporting requirements rather than adding another process.

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### 2. Sharpen the scope to 3-4 priority initiatives across the framework, that respond directly to members' needs.

- a. **Refresh the framework's Theory of Change.** Centre impact outcomes rather than process outcomes.
- b. **Develop a prioritisation method.** Develop criteria that balances resource requirements, feasibility, and Member demand, to help select priority initiatives across the framework. This should be aligned with Members' limited capacity and the evolved funding landscape.
- c. **Continue to focus on integration with other departments.** Embed the new priorities into PVS missions, Standards updates, and regional plans so that the WHF is not perceived as an add-on.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. History, purpose, and development of the WHF

The Wildlife Health Framework (WHF) was developed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) in response to growing global recognition of the importance of wildlife health in managing disease risks at the human-animal-environment interface, after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was officially launched at the end of 2020.

The overall goal of the WHF is “to protect wildlife health worldwide to achieve One Health”.<sup>1</sup> The WHF supports WOAHS Members through two core objectives:

1. Enhancing their ability to manage the risk of pathogen emergence and transmission at the human-animal-ecosystem interface, whilst taking into account the protection of wildlife.
2. Strengthening Members’ surveillance systems, early detection, notification and management of wildlife diseases.

The framework offers a structured approach to better integrate wildlife health into national and global health systems. It is designed as a flexible, evolving platform for action, underpinned by partnerships, technical capacity building, and knowledge sharing. It aims to promote multisectoral collaboration, strengthen veterinary services, develop standards and guidance, improve data systems, and raise awareness of risk pathways and best practices.

The framework was developed through broad consultation, involving WOAHS HQ and Regional Offices, the Delegates and National Focal Points for Wildlife, the Wildlife Working Group and international partners like the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Fauna (CITES) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). As part of this process, WOAHS surveyed Members between June and August 2020, to collect their views on the role of Veterinary Services in wildlife health management. WOAHS continued to map its Members’ needs, such as a 2021 survey to National Focal Points for Wildlife regarding information systems for wildlife health, and a stakeholder mapping exercise in 2023.

This work was completed thanks to the financial support of the Republic of Italy.

### 2.2. Firetail evaluation

This evaluation covers the current implementation period, spanning the first five years of the WHF. The evaluation aims to provide an independent assessment of the WHF, examining its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability since its launch.

Commissioned by WOAHS and delivered independently by Firetail, the evaluation is assessing progress against the framework’s objectives and activities, identifying what has worked well or less well, and gathering lessons learned to inform the development of the next phase of WOAHS’ wildlife health strategy.

Specifically, the evaluation seeks to:

- Assess how well the WHF has supported WOAHS Members in protecting wildlife health through a One Health approach.
- Understand perceptions and experiences of stakeholders involved in or affected by the WHF.
- Identify gaps, opportunities, and recommendations to improve the design, delivery, and strategic alignment of the WHF in its next phase.
- Support internal reflection and learning within WOAHS, and communicate the value of the WHF to Members and external partner.

We conducted 23 interviews with a range of internal and external stakeholders. The evaluation also included two surveys, one distributed to WOAHS’ Regional Representatives and staff, and another sent to all 192 National Focal Points for Wildlife from WOAHS countries and territories.

**Evaluation limitations:** This evaluation draws on a sample of qualitative and quantitative insights, interpreted through Firetail analysis. While we have sought to provide a balanced and evidence-informed narrative, the evaluation findings are not statistically representative of the entire WHF or all its stakeholders and should not be understood as exhaustive. Certain stakeholders have financial links with WOAHS. Featured quotes were selected through Firetail analysis to best illustrate key arguments.

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<sup>1</sup> OIE Wildlife Health Framework concept note (Available [here](#))

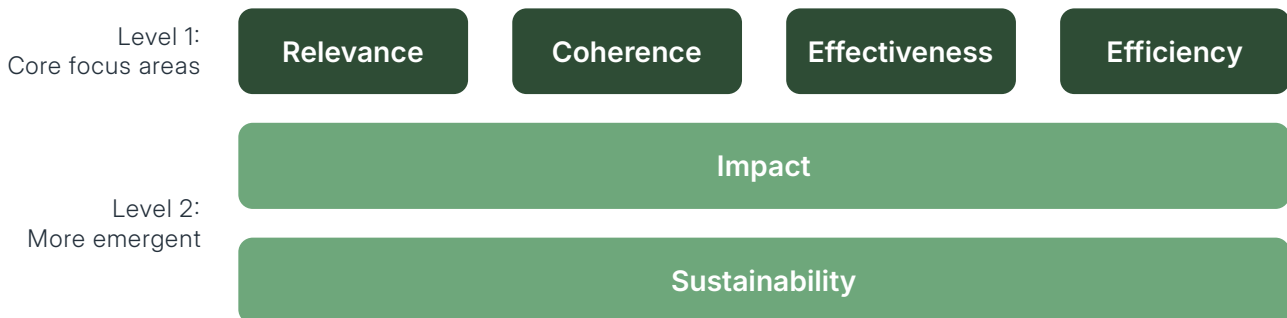
## 2. Introduction

### 2.3. Evaluation framework and key questions

An evaluation framework provides a structured approach and tool to explore key criteria and answer research questions throughout the evaluation delivery. It can be useful to flush out assumptions, and should act as the reference point for assessing the evaluation deliverables.

The evaluation framework was co-designed with the WOHAH team during the inception phase of work, informed by four guiding principles and drawing on best practice, as outlined in the inception report. In conversation with the WOHAH team, it was agreed that the evaluation framework should have two levels, captured in Figure 1 below: the first, as the primary emphasis of the evaluation, assessing the relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the WHF over its first five years. The secondary focus explores the impact and sustainability of the WHF – these factors are relatively nascent and not possible to empirically prove thus far. As a result, the findings of the second level are more emergent and qualitative than for the core focus areas.

Figure 1: Evaluation framework overview



The key evaluation questions for each of the criteria in the evaluation framework are outlined below.

**Relevance** The extent to which the WHF’s objectives, design, and activities address the needs, priorities, and context of WOHAH Members and global wildlife health challenges.

**Coherence** How well the WHF complements, aligns with, and adds value to other related initiatives, policies, and partnerships within WOHAH and across the broader wildlife health and One Health landscape.

**Effectiveness** The extent to which the WHF is set up to achieve its intended objectives and results.

**Efficiency** How well the WHF uses its resources to achieve its aims in a timely and cost-effective manner.

**Impact** Early indications that the WHF is influencing stakeholders’ perceptions and actions.

**Sustainability** Early indications that the benefits of the WHF will endure after it ends.

## 3. Relevance

### 3.1. How responsive has the WHF been to the world and the changing needs of WOAAH Members and other stakeholders since its inception?

#### 3.1.1. Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and urgency around zoonotic disease prevention

The framework states an overall goal of protecting wildlife health around the world to achieve One Health.<sup>2</sup> One Health is predicated on a systems-based understanding of the interconnection and interdependencies between the health of humans, animals, plants, and the environment, and calls for a holistic, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral coordinated approach towards optimal health. This is also because more than 60% of emerging infectious diseases in humans have an animal origin, and 71.8% of these are from wildlife.<sup>3</sup>

As early as the 1980s, WOAAH had given some early thought to wildlife health, particularly through a recognition of the need to improve international standards and regulations.<sup>4</sup> This was later followed by the establishment of the Wildlife Working Group in 1994. But stakeholders note that further work around wildlife health was limited.

In early 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic (SARS-CoV-2 virus) spread rapidly around the world and began to affect human health, livelihoods, and global economic activity, greater attention was placed on the spillover of diseases from wildlife to humans. The concept of One Health entered the mainstream and led to a prioritisation of related initiatives.<sup>5</sup> In total, 28 interviewees stated COVID-19 was a key factor in the WHF's formation.

"I think the pandemic also forced WOAAH to make a decision: either we engage in this and become a source of expertise for other parts of society, or we just stay in our little closet and don't speak up. And I think it was a healthy decision to say we should up our wild animal health expertise."

#### 3.1.2. Addressing gaps in global wildlife health data and surveillance

Prior to launching the framework, WOAAH used an internet-based computer system known as the World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) to process official data on animal diseases and inform the international community.<sup>6</sup> It functions as a source of reliable data, submitted under the responsibility of the WOAAH National Delegate, and then validated by WOAAH. In 2011, WOAAH launched the WAHIS-Wild module which set out a pathway for voluntary reporting of non-listed diseases in wildlife to support "situational awareness" of infectious and non-infectious diseases; but this was paused in 2019 and temporarily replaced by WAHIS-Wild Beta in September 2022.<sup>7</sup>

Despite WAHIS, interviewees identified gaps in data and surveillance processes for wildlife health, prior to the WHF's formation, including:<sup>8</sup>

- Low adoption of the existing WAHIS-wild module for non-listed diseases, with an average of only 51 countries participating, and thus minimal scientific utilisation or relevance. Whilst WAHIS-Wild Beta was live, only 21 countries reported through it.
- Low rates of voluntary reporting, particularly for diseases and species not explicitly included in WOAAH's existing lists and codes, leading to incomplete or biased data.
- Absence of real-time early warning systems for data outside international trade, as mandated by the WAHIS function. Wildlife health often falls outside this remit, or receives resistance due to perceived negative trade implications.
- Vague or abstract legislation regarding wildlife health, leading to ambiguity or complexity in surveillance.

<sup>2</sup> OIE Wildlife Health Framework concept note (Available [here](#))

<sup>3</sup> WHP\_Generic presentation\_032025 (WOAH private document)

<sup>4</sup> Final perspectives on opportunities for WOAAH standards and guidelines to better address wildlife health (WOAH private document)

<sup>5</sup> OIE seventh strategic plan for the period 2021-2025 (Available [here](#))

<sup>6</sup> OIE Global Strategy for the Control and Eradication of PPR (Available [here](#))

<sup>7</sup> Report of the WOAAH Working Group on Wildlife, November 2024 (Available [here](#))

<sup>8</sup> Stakeholder interviews and Business case for implementing a real-time information system for wildlife health\_v03, and Report of the Meeting of the ad hoc Group on Next-Generation Wildlife Health Information System (NG-WHIS) (Available [here](#))

### 3. Relevance

“A very clear example in 2017, we had a disease – highly pathogenic influenza – I think it’s one of the most relevant animal diseases that year. We divided the disease in two different diseases: one is highly pathogenic influenza in poultry, and the other one is highly pathogenic influenza in non-poultry animals including white birds. And this was done really only to separate reporting domestic animal and wildlife because of the fear that reporting something in wildlife is going to affect trade.”

The framework took a direct and comprehensive approach to addressing these gaps. It prioritised the improvement of quality data collection, reporting, and use in one of six core strategic pathways. It sought to position WOAHA as the expert source on wildlife health information, ensuring new guidance on surveillance for diseases, pathogens, and toxins in wildlife would be developed.<sup>9</sup> 18 interviewees noted the responsiveness of the framework’s practical, on-the-ground framing around data collection:

“From the beginning, we used the WHF to connect the dots between the aspirations and guidance coming from WOAHA. This connection was around having grassroots workshops in this country or in this context, and how would you build the veterinary services as the lead to draw information and look at early detection, understanding the dynamics of pathogens at the wildlife livestock interface. And out of that grew this need to have standardised data collection information sharing processes.”

In addition, and building on the WHF’s intent, WOAHA is developing a new information system known as the Next-Generation Wildlife Health Information System (NG-WHIS).<sup>10</sup> Currently in concept/ pilot phases, the NG-WHIS aims to centralise and provide real-time, highly sensitive data on non-listed wildlife events, including mortality and morbidity in wild species – diagnosed or not. This is a broader scope than the WHIS, illustrating WOAHA’s continued responsiveness to the changing needs of the sector.

#### 3.1.3. Responsiveness to WOAHA Members’ needs

Seven interviewees confirmed that the WHF was developed through a highly consultative process, with input from WOAHA staff, regional teams, the Wildlife Health Working Group, Delegates, National Focal Points for Wildlife, international partners, and supporters.

WOAHA began the consultation with a survey to its Members, to find out their views on wildlife health and whether they saw it as an area for WOAHA to get more involved in. The results showed strong support for WOAHA to develop the WHF, and also highlighted what activities they would prioritise for WOAHA to undertake.<sup>11</sup>

“We developed a survey that we sent to all the Delegates to try to know what their needs were, the issues and the challenges, so [parts of the framework] are based on this.”

##### — Focus on standards and guidelines development.

The most frequently cited expectation from Members around the framework was support across standards and guidelines development (76%), followed by legislation support (48%).<sup>11</sup> The framework’s strategic focus on these activities, through Output 4 in particular, was met positively by stakeholders as evidenced by a stakeholder needs assessment conducted in 2023.<sup>12</sup>

##### — Multisectoral coordination and collaboration.

These survey exercises in 2020 and 2023 found that stakeholders frequently cited the need to promote or enhance collaboration and engagement between Veterinary Services and wildlife management teams, and other relevant partners and collaborators across the sector. This was identified through Output 1 of the framework.

“The framework is relying on partnerships among various intergovernmental organisations at the very top level and then at regional and national levels. So I think WOAHA’s approach to partnerships is quite aligned because they adopted all these stakeholder metrics and [the] engagement approach.”

<sup>9</sup> Wildlife working group report, Nov 2024

<sup>10</sup> Report of the Meeting of the ad hoc Group on Next-Generation Wildlife Health Information System (NG-WHIS) (Available [here](#))

<sup>11</sup> Wildlife health survey report (WOAHA private document)

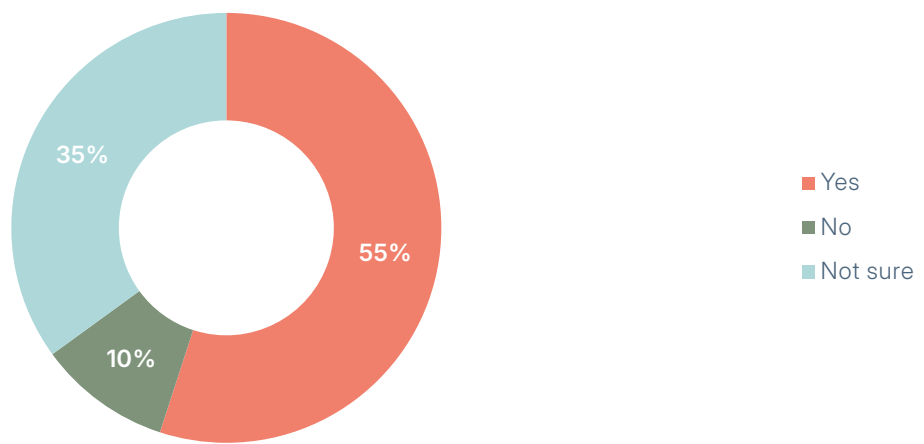
<sup>12</sup> WOAHA Needs Assessment, 2023

### 3. Relevance

As part of this evaluation, a survey was sent to all the WOA National Focal Points for Wildlife (NFPW). Most respondents agreed that the WHF has been responsive to Members' changing needs, as seen in Figure 2 below. This supports the findings from the interviews, with only 10% of respondents answering that the WHF has not been responsive or flexible.

Figure 2: NFPW survey question – WHF's responsiveness to Members' changing needs

**Do you think the WHF was responsive and flexible to the changing needs of WOAH Members over the last five years?**



n=80

As reasons given to support their answer, six Focal Points stated that the WHF was flexible and adaptable by design and during the implementation.

"Very much so and built the capacity of WOAH Members, kept them updated through effective communication, periodical bulletins/reports and publications."

Two respondents used the example of the framework's response to highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) as the clearest example of this.

"The WOAH Wildlife Health Framework has been responsive. It quickly updated HPAI guidelines for global outbreaks and initiated a WAHIS system to better manage complex disease data, adapting to Member needs. This flexibility also extended to strengthening "One Health" partnerships to tackle interconnected global health threats."

### 3. Relevance

#### 3.2. Did the WHF cover, or cover in sufficient detail, all major relevant themes and activities for protecting wildlife health?

##### 3.2.1. Broad scope of the framework

At a higher level, the WHF was designed as a holistic strategy that aimed to capture the broader role of wildlife health for WOA, and meet the needs of a diverse range of stakeholders – both within the organisation and externally. Interviewees noted that this stems from historical resistance to the organisation playing a more active role in supporting wildlife health, and the need to develop a strategy with broad appeal. This also helped with funder support, as the WOA resource mobilisation team was able to bundle up sets of activities to meet the interests of key donors in a relatively flexible and opportunistic way. No one donor funded the entire framework.

“The framework is comprehensive. I think one of the benefits of it being so comprehensive is it can be a really small programme or a really big programme. You can prioritise with the resources.”

On the other hand, eight interviewees raised concerns that the sheer scale and breadth of the framework diluted focus on key activities and thus potential for impact. Furthermore, 12 interviewees noted various complexities related to coordinating and managing different departments, individuals, partners and collaborators around a broad-based framework – implementation could have been streamlined if the number and scope of activities had been clearer.

“Some of us are more concerned about it being too broad and too ambitious and too many components. It’s hard to be successful if you have too many goals and you don’t have the staff and the resources, how do you do them? Well, you can play with language and say, “Oh, yeah, we’re doing a little of everything. We’re doing that and we’re doing that and we’re doing that.” But it’s very hard to do a great job on so many fronts at the same time. [...] But I understand it’s very hard to set priorities.”

##### 3.2.2. Omission of non-infectious causes of wildlife decline

The WHF did not cover upstream prevention factors in its activities or framing. Despite the fact the WHF was developed in response to COVID, there were no activities aimed at addressing the wildlife health issues linked to COVID. This was highlighted by five interviewees, who commented on the organisation’s focus on disease *response*, rather than *prevention* i.e. understanding the factors that contribute to healthy wildlife populations and taking actions to prevent disease. They expressed hope that the next iteration of the framework would consider upstream prevention of disease in wild species in its framing.

“We work on response to when the disease is already there... There could be a clear position of WOA on this, instead of only focusing on response... It does require a mindset shift within the organisation. I hope the new framework could be the driver for this shift.”

Crucially, the omission of upstream prevention activities in the WHF is linked to two key points. First, there is not a consistent understanding of the meaning of ‘wildlife health’ within WOA – it may depend on your background and/or entry point to the concept.<sup>13</sup> This was highlighted by previous consultancies in 2022, but has not been taken forward by WOA.

Secondly, the imperative for improving wildlife health is often framed in terms of its impact on human health or livestock, rather than conservation for its own sake.

“The key element is ensuring that investing in preventative activities, which includes wildlife health surveillance, but also looking at conservation and environmental health, if that is improved, it really reduces the risk of disease spill-over.”

Seven interviewees also critiqued the WHF’s omission of other non-infectious causes of wildlife decline, namely: pollution, chemical exposures, mining, hunting, climate change, and habitat destruction.

<sup>13</sup> Drawn from stakeholder interviews

## 4. Coherence

### 4.1. How aligned and integrated was the WHF with other WOAAH initiatives, and how does it support the wider organisational goals and mission?

#### 4.1.1. Formalising wildlife health within WOAAH's mandate

WOAH operates to disseminate information on animal diseases so to improve animal health globally and support a better world. Historically, the organisation focused on issues of the safe international trade of domestic animals and livestock, while wildlife health has existed as a relatively isolated topic across the WOAAH network.

Despite previous attempts to mainstream the topic, the WHF reflects a formal, programmatic attempt to embed wildlife health more coherently across WOAAH's mandate. This illustrates the responsiveness of WOAAH to upholding its organisational mission for *all* animals, not just livestock.

"We already had a wildlife programme at WOAAH but its scope was a bit smaller, it was more about the relationship between wildlife and livestock diseases... Recognising all that, we thought COVID signalled a needed wakeup call to expand our wildlife health programme. And no other international organisation really has a mandate to deal with wildlife health. You have others that deal with wildlife conservation, but not wildlife health. So we saw it both as an opportunity and a responsibility to expand our wildlife health programme."

Interviewees noted that since the framework's launch, despite some early resistance, there has been a shift in internal mindsets and attitudes towards wildlife health, signalling greater support for the topic than previous years. This has seen strengthening of WOAAH's capacity to focus on wildlife health, with new hires and the creation of new positions, for example.

"There's been a dramatic change at WOAAH with the advent of the framework, because it seems like the message to the employees, the staff here at headquarters was, 'this is serious, and they all need to get on board'. So I think we see more engaged participation in other parts of WOAAH, because people don't want to be left out of something that looks important. Maybe they see the opportunity to contribute to something important, and the framework allows them to do it."

#### 4.1.2. Supporting WOAAH's organisational goals and mission

For over 100 years, WOAAH has been a global authority on animal health. This carries a unique responsibility, and it means the organisation is expected to take a strong leadership role in animal health regulation, standards and policy setting worldwide.

Interviewees shared ways the framework has contributed to this responsibility, through the development of robust, science-based guidelines on critical issues like wildlife trade and surveillance, the creation of institutional mechanisms and expanded capacity like the network of Collaborating Centres for Wildlife, for example.<sup>14</sup> This work has raised WOAAH's profile internationally, and brought new opportunities for partnership and collaboration around its mandate.

"I am definitely convinced that this framework is recognised as a major piece of the global efforts in One Health."

Interviewees noted that the framework has enabled WOAAH to step into more of a leadership role around wildlife health – previously noted as a gap across the organisation – and in support of its mission.

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<sup>14</sup> Stakeholder interview

## 4. Coherence

### 4.1.3. High-level alignment with WOA's strategic initiatives

The WHF is effectively a strategy but was positioned at WOA as a programmatic framework. Our document review found mixed alignment with other WOA initiatives—some predate the WHF and others are disease-specific. The overview below summarises alignment and potential synergies.

Table 1: WHF Alignment with other key WOA initiatives/ strategies

Initiative	Areas of alignment
<b>WOAH's 7th Strategic Plan (2021-2025)</b>	Whilst the five-year strategy was developed after the launch of the framework, its implementation falls over a similar time period. In that sense, the two mutually reinforce one another, with the Strategic Plan providing the overall vision and plan of action for WOA over this period, whilst the WHF supports aspects of this delivery, such as an emphasis on strengthened data collection, partnership working, and enhanced knowledge and awareness.
<b>One Health Joint Plan of Action (WHO, UNEP, FAO, WOA)</b>	In support of the Quadripartite's Joint Plan of Action (of which WOA is a Member), the framework explicitly applies a One Health approach. Both the Plan of Action and the WHF respond to international requests to prevent future pandemics and confirm this aim as a key part of the One Health approach. The Plan states that "most emerging infectious disease in humans (more than 60%) are of zoonotic or animal origin, with the majority of these (around 70%) originating in wildlife". <sup>15</sup> Similarly, the framework references global trends in disease emergence as the rationale for strengthening the wildlife component of animal health.
<b>Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) pathway</b>	The PVS pathway is a core WOA business function that aims to evaluate, assess and support the improvement of veterinary services in Member countries. In 2013, the PVS manuals only mentioned wildlife once, with only a few more references in 2019. According to interviewees, the WHF has now prompted a review of the pathway to deepen its consideration of wildlife health across its methodology, including integrating more specific elements and clearer targets for wildlife. <sup>16</sup> However, the PVS pathway is based on the standards, which has been a cause of internal resistance, citing that the standards must change first.
<b>WOAH's capacity building and training</b>	The WHF broadly aligns with capacity building and training efforts. Successes include strategic planning workshops referencing WHF elements in discussions about wildlife health with senior government officials. Training, including the launch of four e-Learning modules, has seen an increased uptake in interest around wildlife topics. The framework is also credited with new thinking and behavioural change at a high-level – with donors starting to invest in wildlife health.
<b>OIE Aquatic Animal Health Strategy (2021-2025)</b>	The Aquatic Animal Health Strategy (AAHS) has areas of alignment with the WHF. The document sets out the updated plan for 2021-2025 to improve aquatic animal health and welfare worldwide by strengthening standards, capacity, resilience, and leadership to support sustainable growth, safe trade, and One Health goals. Although it does not explicitly reference the WHF, the AAHS delivers on and aligns with the WHF's objectives, outcomes, and output areas – for example, the AAHS's Objective 1 on Standards delivers on the WHF's Output 4 (Guidelines, standards updated & developed). Both also apply a One Health approach.
<b>Roadmap for Zoonotic Tuberculosis (2017)</b>	The Roadmap for zTB, although published prior to the WHF, aligns with the WHF by operationalising its principles in a disease-specific context. The Roadmap focuses on management of a specific zoonotic disease (tuberculosis) which can move between livestock, other wildlife, and humans, therefore illustrating the One Health link between wildlife and human health that the WHF is built upon. Both promote multisectoral collaboration, stronger Veterinary Services, better surveillance, and risk management at the wildlife-livestock-human interface.

<sup>15</sup> One Health Joint Plan of Action: Working together for the health of humans, animals, plants and the environment. 2022-2026

<sup>16</sup> Stakeholder interview

## 4. Coherence

<p><b>OIE Global Animal Welfare Strategy (2017)</b></p>	<p>The Global Animal Welfare Strategy (GAWS) aligns with the WHF, though with different framings – the GAWS focuses on respecting, promoting, and advancing animal welfare, whereas the WHF focuses on protecting wildlife health. Both recognise the links between animal and human health and welfare. Although the GAWS was published prior to the WHF, their goals are nevertheless aligned – for example, the GAWS’ pillar on capacity building and education could help deliver the WHF’s Output 2: Capacity in wildlife health management strengthened. Both emphasise the critical role of National Veterinary Services to implement health and welfare measures in partnership with others.</p>
<p><b>Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (2024–2033)</b></p>	<p>Similar to other Roadmaps and Strategies reviewed, this Strategy aligns with the WHF by operationalising its principles in a disease-specific context. The Strategy explicitly references a One Health approach and delivers on all of its objectives and outputs. Both the WHF and the Strategy rely on WOA/FAO/WHO collaboration, international standards, and strong Veterinary Services to address transboundary threats.</p>
<p><b>Global Strategy for the Control and Eradication of PPR (2015)</b></p>	<p>Similar to other Roadmaps and Strategies reviewed, this Strategy, although published prior to the WHF, aligns with the WHF by operationalising its principles in a disease-specific context (Peste des petits ruminants (PPR)). The strategy focuses on 3 components: a longer-term goal of disease eradication, strengthening veterinary services, and control of other livestock diseases. These components are similar to the WHF’s objectives but without an explicit inclusion of wildlife alongside livestock health, and with no mention of One Health. Both the Strategy and the WHF emphasise the critical role of National Veterinary Services to implement health and welfare measures in partnership with others.</p>
<p><b>The Global Foot and Mouth Disease Control Strategy (2012)</b></p>	<p>Similar to other Roadmaps and Strategies reviewed, this Strategy, although published prior to the WHF, aligns with the WHF by operationalising its principles in a disease-specific context (FMD). The strategy has a similar structure to the PPR strategy, with components focusing on disease control and eradication, strengthening veterinary services, and prevention &amp; control of other livestock diseases. These components are similar to the WHF’s objectives but without an explicit inclusion of wildlife alongside livestock health, and with no mention of One Health. Both the Strategy and the WHF emphasise the critical role of National Veterinary Services to implement health and welfare measures in partnership with others.</p>
<p><b>Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases Strategy (2021–2025)</b></p>	<p>The Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases Strategy for 2021–2025 (GF-TADs) can be seen as an umbrella strategy which informs and guides the disease-specific strategies and frameworks WOA/FAO and others collaborate to produce. Its most recent update was published after the WHF and therefore has good alignment and complementarity with the WHF’s Objectives and Outputs. The GF-TADs strategy informs which TADs would be prioritised for action under the WHF – for example, which require further scientific knowledge (WHF Output 5), awareness and tools (WHF Output 6). However, the WHF is not mentioned explicitly in the GF-TADs Strategy.</p>
<p><b>Global Framework for the Elimination of Dog-Mediated Human Rabies (2018)</b></p>	<p>Similar to other Roadmaps and Strategies reviewed, this Framework, although published prior to the WHF, aligns with the WHF by operationalising its principles in a disease-specific context. The Framework focuses on management of a specific zoonotic disease (rabies) which moves between domestic animals, other wildlife, and humans, therefore illustrating the One Health link between wildlife and human health that the WHF is built upon. The Framework particularly links to the WHF’s Outcome 2 (“A political, policy and scientific environment that allows Veterinary Services to implement effective wildlife health monitoring and management promoted”) – since rabies infection rates and prevention routes are already well-understood, the Framework focuses primarily on socio-political criteria and context that would help prevent its spread.</p>

## 4. Coherence

### 4.1.4. Challenges in integration and implementation

- **The WHF was siloed within WOAAH's structure/ pitched as a separate initiative.** Despite good alignment with WOAAH's overall Strategic Plan, as indicated in the previous section, 17 interviewees reported their perception that the WHF was a sideline initiative for the organisation, and as a result there was not widespread buy-in or uptake of WHF activities in the daily work of staff teams and across the WOAAH network.

"That was my feeling when I came, that the WHF was a little thing on the side, to say that WOAAH occupies this space."

This may be driven by views that the framework was not endorsed by senior leaders and some board members at its inception, and this only happened following the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic that created a clear need, and through the new Director General. It may also be due to the framework being set-up as a new, parallel "programme", rather than at the level of organisation-wide strategy.

"The biggest struggle for me was internal legitimacy because it wasn't a frank move from the direction of the organisation. It wasn't a strong, true will for me at the beginning and we had to fight a lot internally to gain this legitimacy."

To date, there remain some awareness gaps around the WHF that prevent it from being integrated fully across WOAAH (see Section 5 – Effectiveness, and Section 7 – Impact).

- **There was a gap between the WHF and its objectives, and on the ground implementation.** A total of 24 interviewees mentioned issues related to this disconnect, including several of the regional representatives. The most commonly raised issue was that the WHF failed to acknowledge the realities and priorities of the national veterinary services.

"There's a huge disconnect between the WHF and on the ground impact, and this is not only with wildlife health but this is across the organisation. [...] So you give these focal points training but what does that mean on the ground? Is wildlife health really improving? Are certain policies being made that make a difference on the field at the national level?"

"For the next phase, I recommend that WOAAH place more emphasis on practical implementation support at the national level. While the Framework has provided excellent guidelines and tools, many countries still need help translating them into field action."

That said, the WHF was developed to align with WOAAH's model as a standards-setting agency, and was therefore not intended to focus on implementation. Furthermore, the funding model would not cover on-the-ground projects across all Member countries. Where specific funding was available, such as EBO-SURSY, WOAAH did successfully deliver implementation projects.

It was also noted that the WHF did not specify who was responsible for key tasks nor did it provide a template for practical implementation for countries.

"I mean when it comes to the implementation there's massive gaps. No one is responsible for wildlife at the end of the day, especially wildlife health and WOAAH thinks they are, but they're not in practice. And I think that's a big challenge. [...] I think the next iteration could be much more relevant to countries. It's not really reflective of the needs of the countries or even what will resonate with a minister or with a focal point [...] getting that balance right of what people actually care about on the ground."

## 4. Coherence

### 4.2. How effectively does the WHF align with and complement initiatives from other key actors working on wildlife, One Health, and zoonotic disease prevention?

#### 4.2.1. Key organisations and roles

Organisations operating in the One Health space tend to specialise in one of its four pillars: human health, domestic animal health, wildlife health, and environmental integrity. Within those areas, organisations may specialise further – for example, within wildlife health, CITES focuses on regulating endangered wildlife trade, TRAFFIC focuses on monitoring wildlife trade, and WOAHA focuses on animal health. With One Health being such a broad concept, development and action within the space has required these organisations to bring their particular specialisms to collaborative groups, publications and tools.

A summary of key organisations operating in the One Health space is presented in the Appendices.

#### 4.2.2. WOAHA's role in the landscape

WOAHA's organisational focus is on animal/ veterinary health and welfare. In the One Health space, WOAHA has taken a leading role to reflect this, focusing on zoonotic disease monitoring and management.

As part of the Quadripartite (now), the leading voice in the One Health space, WOAHA represents animal health and welfare alongside other organisations representing human health (WHO), environmental health (UNEP), and connections to food and agriculture systems (FAO). Quadripartite initiatives include producing tools such as the Global Early Warning and Response System for Major Animal Diseases, including Zoonoses (GLEWS)<sup>17</sup>, the One Health Joint Plan of Action, and the operational tool of the Tripartite (at the time) Zoonoses Guide.<sup>18</sup>

WOAHA also contributes to broader initiatives, partnerships, and publications, such as the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management and the International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade.

#### 4.2.3. The WHF's position in the landscape

As evidenced by stakeholder interviews, WOAHA's role has historically emphasised the veterinary health of livestock, and less so (though recently increasing) wildlife health. As a result of this, interviewees have reflected that a wildlife health framework led by WOAHA has not always seemed like the best fit for the organisation given the practical divide between wildlife and livestock health – for example, being positioned in separate government departments. This issue can also be exacerbated by misalignment between the aims and objectives of the different departments.

“Veterinary services are not always responsible for wildlife or the health of wildlife. So that it is a stretch at WOAHA that we're talking about things that don't fall under the authority of the voting delegates.”

The WOAHA wildlife health survey in 2020 found that for 81% of Members, their veterinary services are involved in wildlife health management. However, the nature of that involvement ranged from full responsibility to ad-hoc collaborations.<sup>19</sup>

“The framework is very broad and gives relevance to wildlife health that exceeds the functions and powers of the veterinary authority.”

Regardless, WOAHA is well set-up in several ways to lead the WHF:

- Existing, strong connections within governments, who should have the ability to integrate the WHF;
- A strong history and toolkit for monitoring disease emergence in animals'
- An expertise in animal biology and veterinary health, both at the global and country levels;
- The lack of a similar tool or expertise from any other organisation – WHF is filling a specific gap.

<sup>17</sup> Available [here](#)

<sup>18</sup> Available [here](#)

<sup>19</sup> Available [here](#)

## 5. Effectiveness

### 5.1. To what extent is the WHF, including its structure, ways of working, and activities, effective in making progress towards its outputs, outcomes, and objectives?

#### 5.1.1. Effectiveness of the WHF outputs

This evaluation focuses on the WHF's effectiveness in delivering its six intended outputs. Effectiveness here means whether the WHF delivered what it set out to do. Whether these outputs have contributed to its broader goals or on the ground change relates to impact, which cannot yet be meaningfully assessed given some of these activities have only just been finalised (see Section 7). Across all six outputs, the WHF team successfully delivered against most of the planned activities, as outlined in the table below.

Table 2: Planned versus delivered activities across WHF outputs

Outputs	Planned activities	Activities delivered
Output 1 - Multisectoral coordination and collaboration promoted	Formalise new partnerships	Renewed three partnership agreements (IUCN, CITES, CIC) <sup>20</sup>
	Establish Collaborating Centres Network	Established the CC Network and 5 new CCs on Wildlife Health and Biodiversity <sup>20</sup>
	Conduct activities through the CC Network	Conducted 2 activities in 2023/24 <sup>21</sup>
Output 2 - Capacity in wildlife health management strengthened	Deliver workshops/ trainings	Delivered 30 training sessions <sup>20</sup>
	Evaluate knowledge results	<i>Separate evaluation in progress</i>
	Deliver training E-modules	<i>4 E-modules available online<sup>22</sup></i>
Output 3 - Quality data collection, reporting, analysis and use improved	Develop NG-WHIS strategy	Ad hoc Group on NG-WHIS voted to proceed with new/ adapted system <sup>23</sup>
	Launch NG-WHIS development	<i>Halted by senior management, recently resumed</i>
	Set up training programme	10 attended WAHIS-Wild Beta training session <sup>20</sup>
	Generate data analysis and user reports	Released six-monthly reports based on WAHIS wildlife health data
Output 4 - Guidelines, standards, risk reduction strategies updated & developed	Draft and validate guidelines	7 sets of guidelines and guidance produced and published <sup>24</sup>
	Update/ draft and adopt standards	In the process of systematically updating chapters with the standards department <sup>25</sup>
Output 5 - Scientific knowledge developed and disseminated (to inform standards and training)	Award PhD and Master's grants	31 grants for PhD/ Master's students <sup>20</sup>
	Students contribute to scientific articles/ communications	3 peer-reviewed research studies by students using WOAHS wildlife data <sup>20</sup>
Output 6 - Awareness and advocacy tools produced and disseminated	Develop strategy and action plan	Developed communication strategy <sup>20</sup>
	Develop comms tools and dissemination plan	52 communications tools released <sup>26</sup>
	M&E tracking and reporting	<i>No evidence of delivery yet</i>

<sup>20</sup> WFP\_Monitoring-evaluation\_V4 (WOAH private document)

<sup>21</sup> CC\_Network\_Activities (WOAH private document)

<sup>22</sup> WOAHS training courses [here](#)

<sup>23</sup> Report of the Meeting of the ad hoc Group on Next-Generation Wildlife Health Information System (NG-WHIS) (Available [here](#))

<sup>24</sup> Drawn from [here](#)

<sup>25</sup> Stakeholder interview

<sup>26</sup> WOAHS Wildlife Health resource HUB-updated Feb06th-2025 (WOAH private document)

## 5. Effectiveness

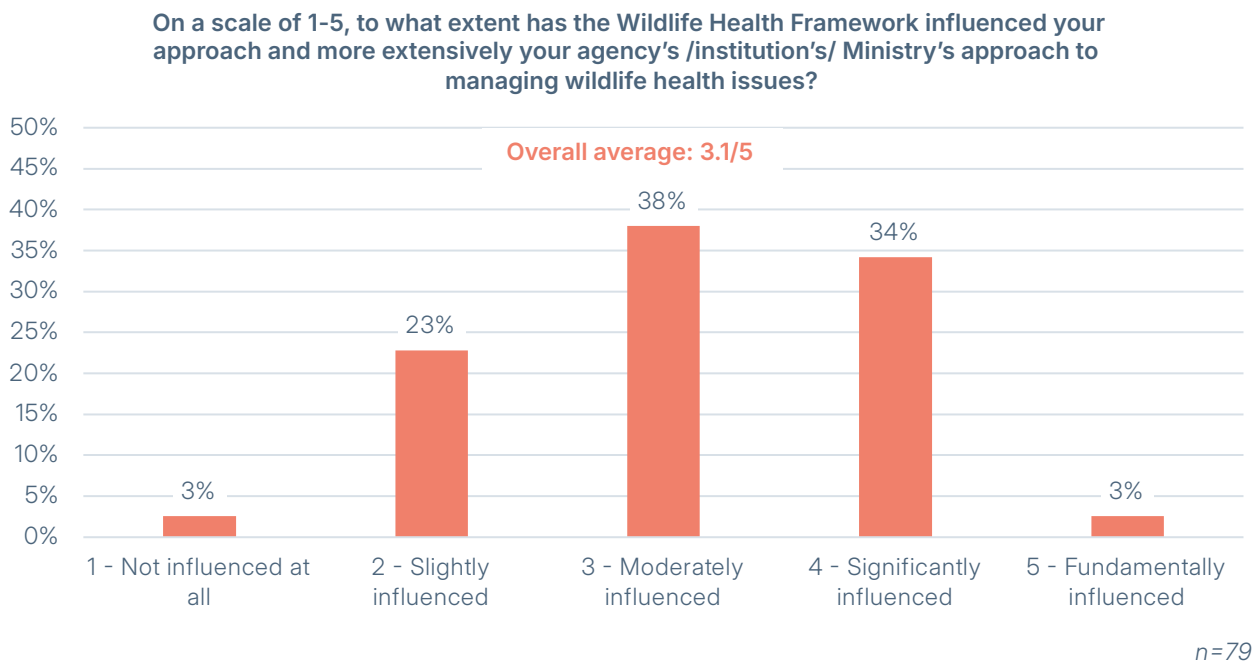
### 5.1.2. Stakeholders' perceptions on WHF's effectiveness

Overall, NFPW survey respondents voted an average of **3.1/5** for the extent to which the WHF has influenced their approach to managing wildlife health issues. The most common theme, covered in 22 respondents' answers, was how the WHF has led to increased cross-sector collaboration within their country or region.

Most other answers either praised the effectiveness of specific activities (covered on the following pages), or praised the WHF more broadly for how it has influenced their whole approach to managing wildlife health issues.

"Overall, the Framework has not been a side reference but a central driver of how we think about, speak about, and plan for wildlife health in [my country]. We still face challenges such as limited technical staff, laboratory capacity, and funding, but the Wildlife Health Framework has provided the clarity and international alignment needed to guide future development in a more strategic and credible way."

Figure 3: NFPW survey question – WHF's influence on their approaches to wildlife health issues



In the free-text responses, two respondents listed capacity restraints as the main factor limiting their ability to implement WHF approaches into their work, one mentioned a lack of OneHealth awareness in their government, and one mentioned security concerns.

"Greater interest and concern are being observed in the management of wildlife health, but the current legal framework and the resources of each entity do not allow further progress."

## 5. Effectiveness

The charts below show how useful each WHF activity was for NFPWs' work, as well as how supported they felt to deliver that work. NFPWs reported that training and capacity building, data collection and surveillance, and guidelines development activities proved both useful and were well supported by the WHF team. On the other hand, NFPWs felt advocacy activities were the least useful and had the least amount of support to enable successful delivery. This is to be expected given that advocacy has not been a focus of the WHF team's work so far.

Figure 4: NFPW survey question – most useful WHF activities/ outputs

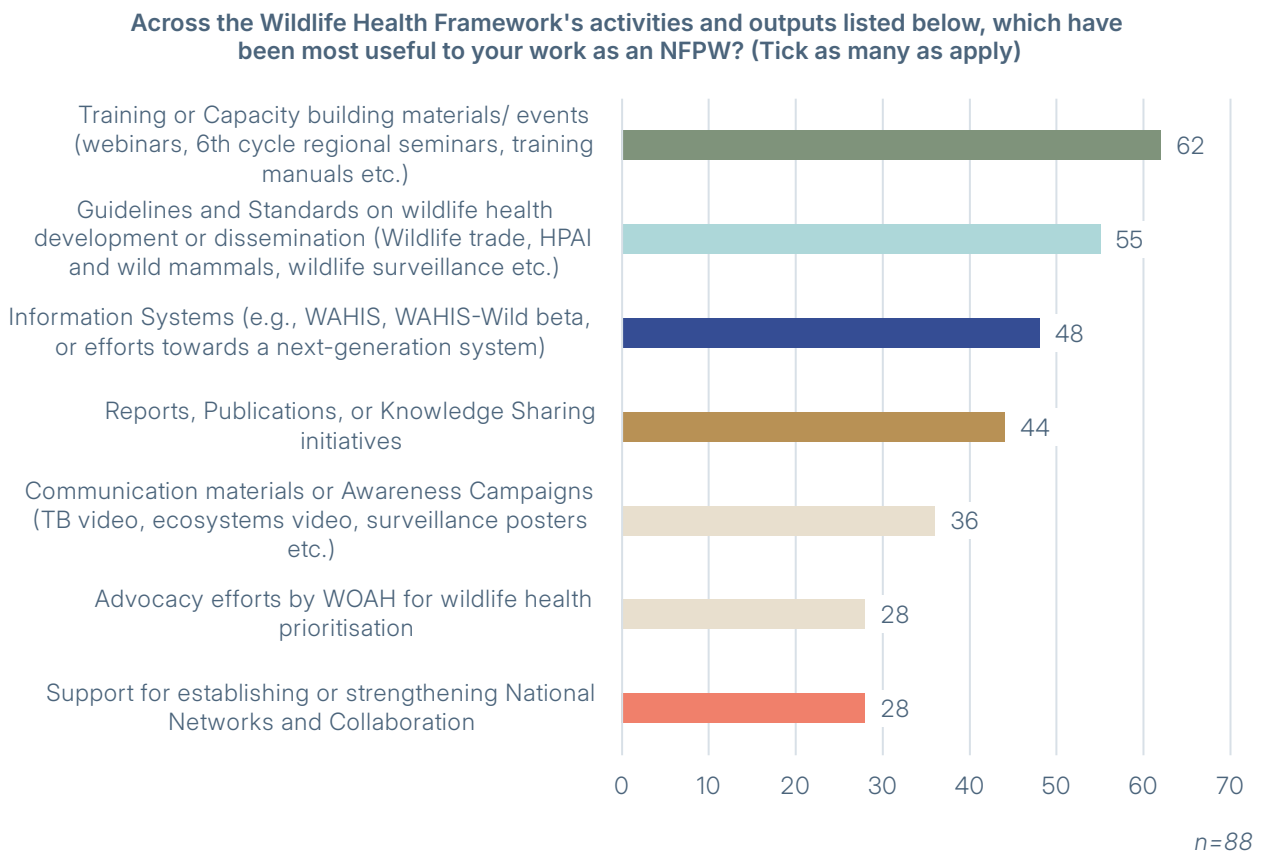
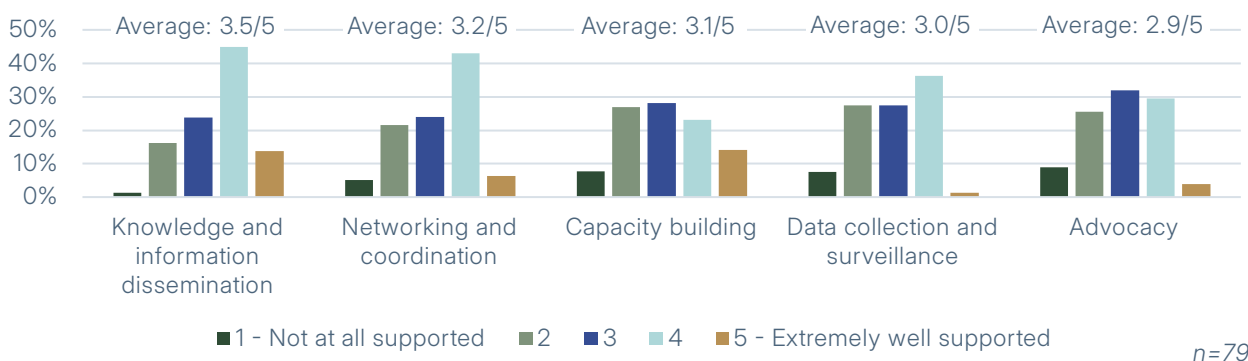


Figure 5: NFPW survey question – WHF team support for NFPW responsibilities

**In your role as an NFPW, to what extent do you feel supported by the Wildlife Health Framework team (e.g. structure, ways of working, communication) to carry out your responsibilities across the following areas?**



## 5. Effectiveness

**Output 1 - Multisectoral coordination and collaboration promoted.** The WHF has fostered numerous successful collaborations and partnerships, significantly raised WOA's profile as a sector leader and contributed to One Health outcomes.

One of the planned activities the framework delivered was establishing the Collaborating Centres Network. Since its inception, the Network has contributed two key activities to the WHF. Most notably, it reviewed Chapter 1.1.2 of the WOA's Manual and provided the Biological Standards Commission with a new version of the chapter, including updates on animal health in general and wildlife health.<sup>27</sup>

WOA also renewed three official partnerships with CITES, IUCN and CIC, as well as cultivating a strong working relationship with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), which recently became an official collaborating centre. Guideline development on disease risk in wildlife trade and surveillance is a product of this collaboration.

"One of the strongest achievements was reviving our long-term partnerships and also creating new ones, like with the Wildlife Conservation Society. It's a great opportunity that was not even looked at before."

In January this year, it was announced that WOA would take on the role of secretariat of the International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade in August 2026. Seven interviewees see this as an opportunity for WOA to enhance its impact in wildlife health over the coming years.

"I'm so happy they are now hosting the Alliance. Obviously that's very narrow, wildlife trade is not something that everyone's working on, but it could be a starting point. WOA could have presentations that are much broader sometimes and touch on issues like land use change, and go into other contexts. So something like that could be a nice way to get a lot of people together and reach across and really compel other organisations to take this on too."

**Output 2 - Capacity in wildlife health management strengthened.** The WHF has designed and delivered a total of 30 wide-ranging training initiatives related to wildlife health management.

In addition, there are now four e-Learning modules available on the WOA's website. There are two modules under the wildlife trade category, and two under Wildlife surveillance.

Whilst there was not consensus among interviewees on the utility of e-Learning modules, NFPW survey respondents showed support for both virtual and in-person sessions.

As shown on the previous page, respondents to the NFPW survey rated training and capacity building materials and events as the most useful WHF activity for their work.

"The most useful activities I have experienced over my whole time as wildlife FP was a second cycle regional training and the 1st and 2nd training manuals for wildlife FPs. They provided sound guidance on what was needed in a national wildlife surveillance system and aligned well the Terrestrial Code. I drew heavily on those materials when establishing a standalone wildlife surveillance programme within the Veterinary Authority."

That said, 16 survey respondents also requested the WHF to provide additional opportunities for training. Specifically, three asked for diagnostics training, two for more targeted training sessions for specific challenges, and 11 requested expanding the number of sessions or the participants invited to attend, to include those from environmental agencies or similar bodies.

<sup>27</sup> CC\_Network\_Activities (WOA private document)

## 5. Effectiveness

**Output 3 - Quality data collection, reporting, analysis and use improved.** In 2011, WOAAH developed WAHIS-Wild to enable Members to submit voluntary reporting for approximately 50 non-listed diseases. This module was shut down in 2020. As part of the WHF, WAHIS-Wild Beta was developed and launched in September 2022. At the last regional conference, WOAAH Delegates noted that WAHIS-Wild Beta was the tool most cited in their respective countries.<sup>28</sup>

However, engagement on the new platform was poor and only 11 countries submitted data in its first 5 months.<sup>29</sup> WOAAH's analysis of this data is available to view online, and shows a total of 709 disease cases were reported by 21 countries since 2019.<sup>30</sup>

The main reason cited by interviewees is the system offers "little incentive for reporting wildlife diseases". Twelve interviewees went further and stated that there were disincentives for reporting diseases due to concerns over trade implications.

"It's a tiny, tiny fraction of what is out there, and why would anyone report if they don't have to? It adds another layer and if they do, there's trade issues."

Despite these challenges, respondents to the NFPW survey voted the WAHIS-Wild Beta as the third most useful output to their work. However, they also felt relatively unsupported to deliver data collection and surveillance activities.

WOAH is currently developing the Next-Generation Wildlife Health Information System (NG-WHIS). This initiative aims to establish a coordinated global long-term strategy to optimise reporting in wild species. This initiative was paused for a year but has since been restarted following changes in senior management.

"WAHIS/ WAHIS-Wild Beta: Access to and participation in wildlife health reporting platforms is critical for a small country like ours. These systems help us contribute data to the global network and also access information from other countries that can inform early warning and preparedness."

**Output 4 - Guidelines, standards, risk reduction strategies updated and developed.** A total of 26 interviewees cited the guidelines developed as one of the framework's most effective activities. This was also a finding from WOAAH's regional conference last year, where Delegates from Europe, Africa, and the Americas ranked the guidelines as the WHF's best achievement.<sup>31</sup>

Multiple interviewees, both internal and external, described how these are starting to guide wildlife health surveillance programmes in some countries, for examples in Southeast Asia and Liberia.

"The guidelines were piloted in Thailand and there are other countries that are interested which is great. They have also been extremely well received by our international partners."

Six interviewees questioned whether the guidelines are too theoretical for use in practice.

"We produced several very high-quality guidelines. But the point then are they useful? Are they used by the Members? That's super difficult to say."

That said, one partner we spoke to described how WOAAH's guidelines were valuable as a reference point, which enabled them to use their on-the-ground resources and connections to convene people and implement surveillance programmes.<sup>32</sup>

These interview findings were validated by the NFPW survey responses, with guidelines development and dissemination voted the second most useful WHF activity for their work.

"The technical guidance provided by WOAAH on wildlife trade, HPAI in wild birds, and other disease threats has been extremely valuable... These guidelines offer a practical and science-based foundation for designing response strategies, updating protocols, and building national capacity."

<sup>28</sup> WOAAH Regional conference 2024-2025 (WOAH private document)

<sup>29</sup> Business case for implementing a real-time information system for wildlife health\_v03.pdf (WOAH private document)

<sup>30</sup> See [here](#)

<sup>31</sup> WOAAH Regional conference 2024-2025 (WOAH private document)

<sup>32</sup> Stakeholder interview

## 5. Effectiveness

**Output 5 - Scientific knowledge developed and disseminated (to inform standards and training).** As part of the EBO-SURSY project, WOH has awarded a total of 31 grants for PhD and Master's students. Two WHF insiders also noted that EBO-SURSY is a project that has been successful in strengthening the connection to field implementation.

"EBO-SURSY is a project with not just guidelines at the top level, but people can see concrete impact on the ground."

In terms of scientific articles, WHF-funded students have already published three scientific articles related to wildlife health.<sup>33</sup> There have also been approximately 14 peer-reviewed research articles using WOH wildlife data since the WHF's inception. No articles have yet been published that use WAHIS-Wild Beta data. There are also approximately a further 70 articles that refer to WOH, wildlife, and OneHealth approaches more broadly.

Twelve interviewees, covering WHF insiders, Regional Representatives, and external partners, raised the knowledge and data developed and disseminated as one of the framework's key activities.

"We also managed to use the data that we collect in order to share more knowledge with the international community, and the writing of scientific papers."

The NFPWs regard Output 5 as the third most useful activity for their work, and across all activities, feel best supported by the WHF team to deliver it – reporting an average score of 3.5/5 (see Figure 5).<sup>34</sup>

**Output 6 - Awareness and advocacy tools produced and disseminated.** Interviewees were unanimous in attributing the increased salience and attention on wildlife health to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 (see Section 3 – Relevance). When the WHF was formed, channelling that attention into sustained awareness around the issue, and ultimately action, was a key part of the WHF's theory of change.<sup>35</sup>

"At the General Assembly, the wildlife health side event was far better attended than I would have thought. So there is interest within WOH and amongst the veterinarians to engage more strongly in wildlife related aspects."

There was near universal recognition (33 interviewees) that the WHF had successfully managed to cultivate interest in wildlife health issues, both within WOH and externally. This was starting from a very low baseline of awareness and interest within WOH, and the WHF was often viewed as a separate initiative (see section 4.1.4.).

That said, several interviewees went on to note that the world has moved on since the pandemic, but most acknowledged that interest in wildlife health is still far higher than pre-pandemic levels, with the WHF playing a significant role in maintaining this.

Whilst NFPWs did not rate Output 6 in their most useful activities, in the free-text responses, 26 Focal Points described using WHF comms materials in their work. This included using them to raise awareness among public audiences, as well as to influence national policy-making.

"The communication materials—like the awareness videos and posters—helped me engage others, including decision-makers, on key wildlife health issues."

<sup>33</sup> WFP\_Monitoring-evaluation\_V4 (WOH private document)

<sup>34</sup> NFPW survey results

<sup>35</sup> OIE Wildlife Health Framework concept note (Available [here](#))

## 5. Effectiveness

### 5.1.3. Three key drivers of ineffectiveness

- **Capacity burden on WOAH Members.** Thirteen interviewees noted that many veterinary services, particularly those in developing countries, have limited staff and resources which can create a bottleneck around the WHF's activities. This is especially true if the remit falls outside of the standard requirements for veterinary services.

"I think to a certain extent we have to be careful with how much we burden our membership. We're the secretariat for our Members, but they are all very busy. Many of the veterinary services that we target might have very little staff, especially those that are targeted by capacity building measures."

Capacity and resource constraints were noted by six interviewees, including some Regional Representatives, as a major factor in the low level of submissions of voluntary reporting data for non-listed diseases. This led to some interviewees suggesting it would be a better allocation of resources if the WHF focussed on data collection and reporting for listed diseases only.

"There is a lot of pressure on veterinary services to provide a lot of data for a variety of things... when it comes to specifically non-listed diseases, I have to ask myself the question, is that really sensible?"

This echoed the findings from the NFPW survey, where 25 respondents left free-text responses indicating that resource constraints were a limitation in implementing the WHF's activities.

"I recommend that the WHF be more in line with reality, current regulations, and the resources available in the Member countries. In most cases, wildlife health is not the responsibility of the veterinary authority."

That said, nine other interviewees saw immense value in collecting data for non-listed diseases, and felt it was inherent to the WHF's purpose. One suggestion was that the WHF should offer more resources and training for Members if it is to maintain the inclusion of non-listed diseases.

- **Ineffective governance structure.** Three WHF insiders raised concerns around the role and effectiveness of the WHF Steering Committee. One long-term Member of the Working Group on Wildlife was not even aware that the Steering Committee existed. That said, the WHF team did convey the governance of the framework to the Working Group. This suggests that the method of communication was ineffective for this group.

Several interviewees believed that the Steering Committee was not involved with the WHF nearly enough to provide a strong and constructive steer – and was even seen as an impediment to progress at times.

"We have very little endorsement from [the steering committee], only from time to time and this was not really useful and even an impediment for our progress because some people didn't understand the interest of working on this topic internally."

- **Insufficient internal communications strategy.** Seven internal interviewees noted that some WOAH staff remain unaware of the WHF and its activities, whilst a further five interviewees felt that most WOAH staff were unaware of the framework. The WHF team has not developed a dedicated internal communications strategy, which likely contributes to its limited diffusion across the organisation. The communications team confirmed that each team manages its own internal outreach, and gave examples of teams releasing their own newsletters – but there is no dedicated or regular internal newsletter to share activities or highlight updates around the WHF to other departments.

"There are some colleagues that are completely aware [of the framework] and following and taking [the framework] into consideration. There are others that are not even aware that this framework exists."

There are other factors that are likely to have contributed to this finding as well. Namely, high staff turnover across WOAH over the past 5 years, and roadblocks at upper management level preventing a systemic and consistent cascade messaging to all staff.

## 5. Effectiveness

### 5.2. How well did WOAAH leverage peers and partnerships through the delivery of the WHF?

#### 5.2.1. Design of the WHF

- **The Working Group on Wildlife was heavily involved from the outset.** Founded in 1994, the Working Group comprises world-leading scientific experts and advises WOAAH on wildlife matters. Our desk research and interviews indicate this was the group most consulted in the design of the framework, including the initial drafting of documents.

“As a working group, we have taken ownership of the framework. In fact, we structure our working group meetings around the six outputs of the framework.”

- **WOAH-IUCN partnership was influential at the design stage.** This strategic partnership is strong due to collaborating on the Inter-agency Liaison Group on Invasive Alien Species (through the CBD). It is widely seen as a success story because it was mutually reinforcing, and helped to amplify WOAAH's new wildlife focus to the global stage.

“I'm not 100% confident it was the framework itself or what it was that led to the collaboration with IUCN, but the buy-in was there from WOAAH in response to IUCN reaching out. Without the framework, I think that would have been very difficult to get.”

- **WOAH engaged proactively and widely, but the stakeholders consulted lacked diversity.** There was a sense from one partner and one WHF insider that, despite WOAAH's intent to consult widely as part of the WHF's development, it is guilty of “hearing from the same groups”. The stakeholders felt the framework would have benefitted from consulting different specialist groups, doing more targeted outreach, and gathering more “diversity of thought”.

#### 5.2.2. Delivery of the WHF

- **WOAH has been actively working with partners such as the FAO, IUCN, CITES, and UNEP to deliver activities within the framework.** These include wildlife health management guidelines such as risk assessment, and disease specific guidelines to help standardise wildlife diseases surveillance and management activities.<sup>36</sup>

An important example of successful delivery with partners is the Nature 4 Health (N4H) project, bringing together the EcoHealth Alliance, UNEP, UNDP, IUCN, WHO, and WOAAH to support countries in implementing One Health initiatives.<sup>37</sup>

- **Partnerships with WCS and CIC were well aligned.** The CIC collaboration was renewed in 2024 with an MoU and updated annual workplan, including quarterly calls to advance shared priorities. WOAAH also works with CIC through the Collaborative Partnership on Wildlife Management, and on N4H. WOAAH provides guidance, and CIC and WCS provide on-the-ground support. There are some limitations on the partnership with CIC due to divergent goals of the memberships.

“It was nice to have a document from WOAAH saying “this is what you should be doing” and we could come in as an organisation on the ground with the resources and the ability to convene people.”

- **Perception of a lack of comprehensive input from national stakeholders.** Two interviewees felt that the framework was written with “NGO-bias” and that it did not adequately reflect the practical needs of the public sector or what would resonate with a minister or national focal point.
- **IUCN used the framework to receive funding from GIZ.** As evidenced, IUCN is an historic partner of WOAAH. The WHF cited IUCN directly in its planned activities, providing a mandate for further collaboration. This has since enabled co-funding opportunities in addition to signing the MoU to implement aspects of the framework.

<sup>36</sup> Final Perspectives Opportunities – Pacific Epidemiology Services Ltd

<sup>37</sup> Communications Strategy for Wildlife\_092023 (WOAH private document)

## 6. Efficiency

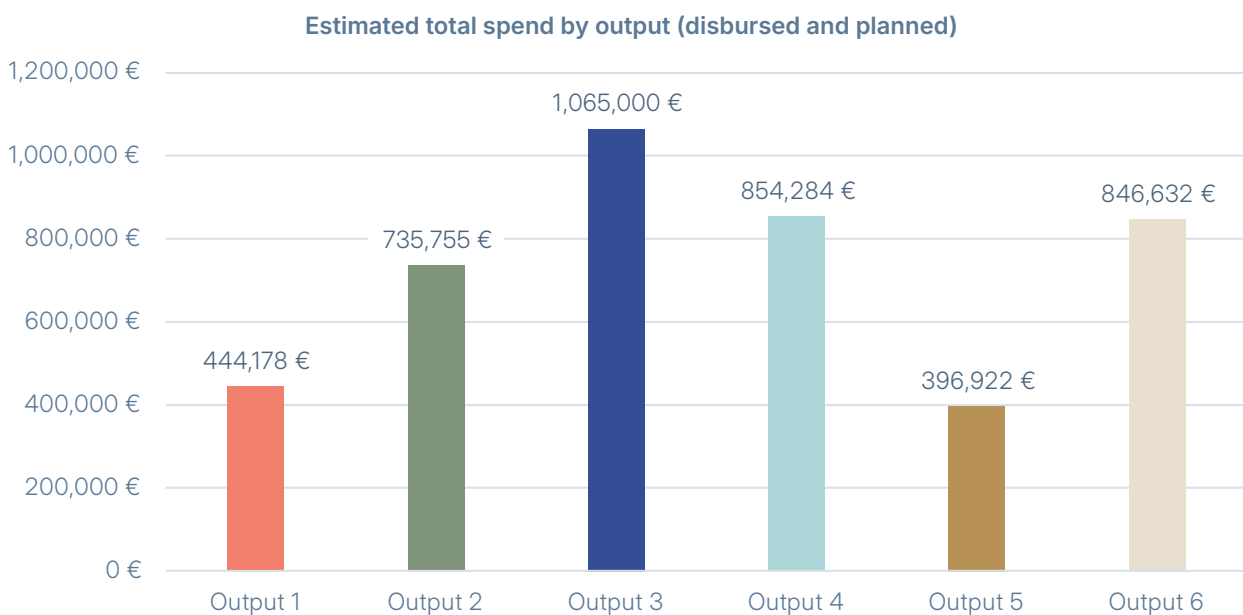
### 6.1. How efficiently has the WHF used its resources to achieve results, and could alternative models or activities have delivered better outcomes with greater cost-effectiveness?

#### 6.1.1. High-level financial overview

At the time of writing this report, a budget of 4,342,770 € had been allocated to Wildlife Health Framework activities. With the exception of one unrestricted grant worth 417,276 €, all the funding (90.4%) was for specified activities and thus restricted funding. In addition to this funding, WOH also received 20,000,000 € for the ZOOSURSY Project and 10,000,000 € for the EBO-SURSY Project. These grants were not included in the analysis for this evaluation.

The WHF team provided a breakdown of the grants and which outputs they related to, as shown on Figure 6 below. Please note, where a grant covered more than one output, the total figure was divided evenly across the outputs.<sup>38</sup>

Figure 6: Estimated total spend on the WHF by output (disbursed and planned)



Whilst these numbers are only a rough estimation, there are no striking observations given the analysis and findings in the previous section.

- Outputs 2, 3, 4, and 6 received relatively more funding and the outputs deemed most effective by this evaluation.
- Output 1 was repeatedly highlighted as one of the most effective activities by interviewees but received significantly less funding than the other outputs. That said, the NFPWs did rate this initiative as one of the least useful for their work.

Overall, the WHF's approach to funding likely limited efficiency given that it was almost all restricted funding and so could not be adapted to activities or delivery progress over time. This is typical for early-stage programmes. As noted on the following page, the WHF became more efficient over its duration, largely due to the increased capacity from growing the project team.

<sup>38</sup> Estimates of financial data provided by the WHF team

## 6. Efficiency

### 6.1.2. Grant claim backs

Before the WHF was launched in 2020, the project team had only two staff members working part-time on wildlife health issues. As funding increased due to increased donor interest in the issue during the pandemic, WOHAH lacked the internal capacity to disburse all grants timeously.<sup>39</sup>

This was partly due to WOHAH's wider organisational challenges, including slow internal processes that caused delays. Additionally, the WHF team relied on other departments to implement some activities. When this support fell through, it led to budget underspend, and unspent funds were reclaimed by donors. These factors combined to limit the effective and timely use of the available grant funding.<sup>40</sup>

"In order to implement some of the activities we were depending on other colleagues from other departments. And so we put that budget on hold for years and years. And now the donors are claiming that money back. But it's also an organisational problem that we struggle with donor deadlines to deliver on time because we also have internal process that are very long."

Since then, the WHF team has hired two new, full-time staff members and all remaining grants with deadlines before June 2028 have been disbursed or allocated.<sup>41</sup>

### 6.1.3. Other inefficiencies

- **Initial overlap with the Working Group on Wildlife.** When the WHF first began, one WHF insider interviewee felt that the Working Group on Wildlife was running more like a parallel initiative to the WHF, rather than acting as the technical expertise group and advocacy body for the WHF. Two interviewees noted that this has improved significantly in recent years, with more clarity around the role of the Working Group and how it relates to the WHF.

- **Overlap and friction with different data and reporting systems.** In total, 17 interviewees mentioned that the development, introduction, and maintenance of more than one IT system onto which users could upload data was cumbersome and caused confusion among users. Interviewees report that this created unnecessary friction for users, reducing reporting.

Interviewees mentioned this was an issue within WOHAH, with "so many independent systems that don't talk to each other", such as WAHIS and WAHIS-Wild-Beta.<sup>42</sup> But also with systems at other organisations (e.g. African Vulture poisoning database), with every organisation "pushing their own systems".<sup>43</sup>

That said, this was not a major theme across the NFPW and Regional Representatives surveys.

- **The WHF was spread too thin given resources.** During the initial development of the WHF, the Working Group on Wildlife voiced their concern that the scope was too ambitious<sup>44</sup> – many stakeholders still hold this view today (see 3 – Relevance). Whilst interviewees understood that a wide remit on wildlife was a useful entry point for WOHAH, relevant to the level of allocated resources and capacity, it was challenging to set up and deliver something of this scale.

"It's too ambitious and there are too many components. It's hard for it to be successful if there are too many goals and you don't have the staff and the resources."

That said, the hiring of more staff did create more capacity in the team, and the WHF did end up successfully delivering against most planned activities.

<sup>39</sup> Stakeholder interview

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Drawn from overview of WHF funding, shared by the WOHAH resource mobilisation team (WOAH private document).

<sup>42</sup> Stakeholder interview

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

# 7. Impact

## 7.1. How was the WHF perceived by WOAH Members and other stakeholders?

### 7.1.1. Generally positive perceptions internally but some issues remain

- **Raised the profile of wildlife health within WOAH.** The framework has supported a notable increase in organisational awareness of wildlife health and its connection to WOAH's mission. This should be viewed as a success, given the WHF was considered a "radical idea" when it was first proposed due to WOAH's historical mandate to ensure the safe international trade of domestic animals, and the framing of wildlife as a threat to livestock.<sup>45</sup> Most interviewees agreed that wildlife health has now become part of the conversation as a result of the framework.

"It's raised the profile of wildlife health within the organisation, the Director Generals are talking about it, it comes up at meetings, and it's become part of WOAH. People mention it a lot now, I don't know if they understand it completely. It seems like the WHF was born and now it's a 5-year-old kid and it's starting to toddle around the organisation. I don't know how seriously everyone takes the 5-year-old kid, but you certainly notice them and they get attention!"

The expansion of WOAH staff with two new roles dedicated to wildlife indicates the organisation's growing commitment to this issue.

- **Lack of widespread awareness of the WHF itself and its activities.** Despite raising the profile of wildlife health for some WOAH staff, interviewees as a whole felt that "definitely not" everyone at WOAH was aware of the WHF.<sup>46</sup> There were also other staff who are likely to have heard of the WHF and some of the key activities, but lacked a more comprehensive understanding of the framework.

Two likely reasons for this are raised in previous sections, namely: the siloed nature of the WHF and an insufficient internal comms strategy.

- **Some internal resistance around the framework suggesting a lack of legitimacy.** Fourteen interviewees raised instances of WOAH colleagues' resistance to the WHF as a continual challenge in their work. For example, WHF staff raised that their requests were often bottom of the list for wider WOAH staff. For those who raised it, this issue was perceived not as a function of awareness, but as a conscious decision to deprioritise or dismiss their requests.

"The internal legitimacy is still an everyday struggle for me. The fact that colleagues will constantly ask "why are we doing that? Do we need to do that? Is this really our job?" This is a daily question that we get. So there is still a lot to do internally."

### 7.1.2. Very positive external perceptions of the WHF

All partners that Firetail spoke to complimented the intent of the WHF, acknowledging the impact of WOAH entering the space, as well as how specific activities have supported partners' work. WHF staff were also aware of how well regarded the framework has been across the wider sector.

"WOAH's presence, engagement and participation and discussion of resolutions has been helpful in shifting some of the conversation. I think they were particularly helpful at the conference in Cali where the biodiversity and health action plan was adopted."

IUCN in particular credit the framework as providing a mandate for collaboration between the two organisations. Collaboration is seen as successful because IUCN's focus on environment and wildlife complements WOAH's agricultural and animal health mandate – ultimately bringing the two sectors together towards a One Health approach, for enhanced, longer term impact.

<sup>45</sup> Drawn from stakeholder interviews

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

## 7. Impact

### 7.2. What evidence is there that the WHF has contributed to changes in awareness, attitudes, or behaviours among WOHM Members and other stakeholders, particularly in ways that reduce disease risk, support One Health outcomes, and promote wildlife health?

There are a few caveats to note when assessing early impact of the WHF. The first is the scale of the issue the framework is aiming to resolve. The two overarching objectives are long-term – it is not expected that significant progress towards these will be made during the framework’s first phase. Secondly, the first two years of the WHF were delivered during the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited activity.

“Wildlife health is a global thing and there’s so many different needs within in it. I mean, it could take an organisation the size of WOHM to really take that on, so it’s a pretty big undertaking.”

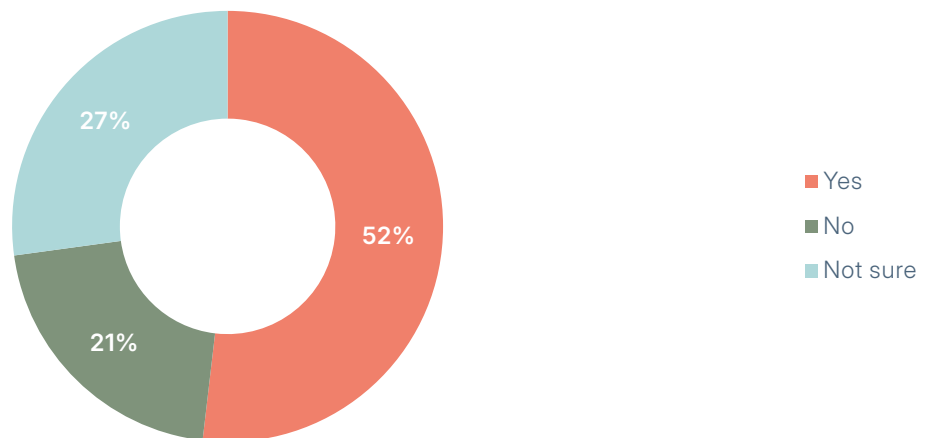
Nevertheless, this evaluation has captured some early indications and emergent evidence of the framework’s impact.

#### 7.2.1. Evidence that the WHF has successfully influenced stakeholders’ awareness and behaviours

Over half of the survey respondents had noticed or heard examples of the WHF influencing stakeholders’ awareness, attitudes, or behaviour. The most common example cited was around HPAI, where eight respondents noted how the WHF had raised awareness, or strengthened and spurred surveillance and reporting of suspected HPAI cases. Other changes include six mentions of increased cross-sector collaboration, and six mentions of raising awareness among the general public or in regions where there are outbreaks (e.g. Marburg).

Figure 6: NFPW survey question – WHF’s influence on stakeholders’ awareness, attitudes or behaviours

**Have you noticed or heard examples of the Wildlife Health Framework influencing stakeholders’ awareness, attitudes or behaviour in relation to wildlife health issues?**



n=81

“Promoting the reporting of wildlife avian influenza carcasses is an excellent example of how the WHF positively influences public awareness, attitudes, and behaviour. It educates the public about avian influenza risks and fosters a sense of responsibility, leading to prompt reporting of deceased wild birds.”

The WHF’s impact was not even across the different regions. Fourteen interviewees stated that Asia Pacific was where the framework has had most success so far. The reasons cited for this include dedicated and proactive staff in the region, funding and resource mobilisation and the establishment of four subregional wildlife health networks for Focal Points. The Americas and the Middle East were consistently mentioned as the regions the WHF has had least impact.

## 7. Impact

### 7.2.2. Early signs of impact of the WHF

- **Increased salience of wildlife health issues amongst some veterinarians and WOAH Members.** Almost all interviewees agreed there is growing recognition of wildlife health as a relevant and important topic within WOAH's broader mandate, and in key countries. Many interviewees observed that it is increasingly being included in discussions and agendas.

"I think there's more traction with the Members for wildlife health now. It's part of the conversation now, even with the Members. Specifically, during the last general session a few Members actually made a point of note to talk about wildlife so that was good."

- **Changed behaviours and mindsets of senior leaders.** Nine interviewees argued that the WHF has been most successful in reaching those higher up in organisations. This could be due to the early stage of the framework, and the time needed for awareness to diffuse to all levels. It indicates an opportunity for the WHF to shift future agendas.

"This framework has definitely created new thinking and some behavioural changes, not at the grassroots level but at the top level, and donors also started investing into this area."

- **Operationalised guidelines on wildlife trade.** The CCs Network, established as part of the WHF, has fostered cooperation between various Collaborating Centres. This has already led to impactful activity, and is an example of where the WHF has had most success in terms of operationalising and implementing its guidance.

"Where it has worked has been where there is cooperation between the centres. We've worked with the Thai government on operationalising guidelines on wildlife trade, and the Cambodian government want to do it. And that's been with collaboration centres working together."

- **Early examples of influencing policy change.** An interviewee described how the WHF acts as a policy influencing tool in their country, as it is a "lot easier" to do so with "backing from one of the recognised international bodies" like WOAH.

"We use [the WHF] tactically for influencing government... For us, impact is about policy change and also about stakeholder groups being brought on board. And those are two concrete examples where, where we can influence the national policy agenda, or stakeholder buy in, by being able to refer to that framework."

They went on to outline how their country's national programme was currently being developed, and was looking to align activities to the framework.

- **NFPWs noted several specific examples of the WHF's impact.** As mentioned on the previous page, the WHF's campaign in response to HPAI was noted as a clear example of the WHF's impact. The Delegates to Europe, Africa, and the Americas also voted for the Avian Influenza and Wildlife: Risk Management for People Working with Wild Birds (2022) as one of the most useful guidelines issued by WOAH.<sup>47</sup>

Another noted example was how the extensive outreach during the free rabies vaccination campaign led to owners of monkeys and other animals coming in for vaccines.

One survey respondent mentioned how they noted WOAH's regional seminars and comms materials had led to "local veterinary officers and environmental staff paying more attention to disease risks at the wildlife-livestock-human interface". They went on to give this example:

"In one instance, during a joint field visit in a protected area, stakeholders from both the Ministry of Agriculture and the wildlife authority discussed the need for improved wildlife disease surveillance—something that rarely happened before."

<sup>47</sup> WOAH Regional conference 2024-2025 (WOAH private document)

## 8. Sustainability

### 8.1. Are there any indications of the long-term benefits from the WHF, such as sustained momentum amongst WOAHA Members or partners?

After only five years of implementation and effectively a pilot phase, it is difficult to assess whether the WHF will see sustained benefits after its implementation. At this stage, there is limited evidence that the framework has built long-term sustainability.

#### 8.1.1. Opportunities for the WHF to build sustainability

As noted previously, WOAHA will assume the secretariat of the International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade Alliance, in August 2026. This signifies the organisation is seen as a trusted and capable partner by the sector and key funding partners, reinforcing its global profile.

"The secretariat of the International Alliance is a big achievement for the programme... because if we hadn't developed the programme, we wouldn't have been selected by the German government to take that over. So that's a huge achievement that they were confident enough through the selection process."

Interviewees note this development gives WOAHA a unique opportunity to shape the narrative around wildlife health and trade in the future, indicating a potential longer-term benefit of the framework beyond its scope. WOAHA has supported this, arguing its role as Alliance secretariat opens up opportunities for enhanced technical guidance and recommendations around animal health, strengthened regional capacity and local adaptation, innovation and new initiatives over the next decade.<sup>48</sup>

"Steering the secretariat of the Alliance is an important evolution of this process, and hopefully it will be helpful to keep these issues moving in the right direction."

WOAHA is also delivering two other projects that have the potential to build sustainability towards the WHF's objectives. Namely, N4H Mongolia, and ZOOSURSY, the largest project ever managed by WOAHA and builds on the successes of the EBO-SURSY project.

#### 8.1.2. Potential challenges to sustained momentum

2019/20 created a window of opportunity for the WHF, as interest in the intersection of animal health and human health burst onto the global agenda. This saw substantive interest from key governmental donors and other financial supporters. As a result, framework activities were well funded (see Section 6 – Efficiency).

Five years on, the landscape for issues of international development, global health and conservation has changed substantially. It is a very challenging, highly fragmented funding environment, with significant ODA cuts by key governments earlier in the year and donors continually re-evaluating or reprioritising their commitments. If this trend continues, it could see interest in wildlife health waning in the longer term.

"It's true that there are cuts everywhere. The huge support we had with COVID and interest in wildlife is kind of going down. There's still some connection with the major donor interests which is trade. What is becoming challenging, is how we sell the WHF to connect it to areas of interest for our regular donors."

Alongside this, the WHF relied on external project-based funding from a limited number of governmental donors for its first phase. There is no coherent funding strategy for its next phase of delivery – as one interviewee noted, one cannot afford to be opportunistic in the current landscape.

"The funding strategy is absolutely opportunistic, and based on what countries want to give. It's totally unstable."

Furthermore, five out of the six regional representatives survey respondents indicated that they had not seen any indications of sustained engagement, increased capacity, or observable long-term benefits in their regions yet.

<sup>48</sup> See interview [here](#)

## 9. Conclusion and recommendations

### 9.1. Conclusion

This evaluation concludes that the Wildlife Health Framework was a timely and broadly relevant response to post-COVID priorities, formalising wildlife health within WOAAH and elevating WOAAH's profile globally and among key sector and delivery partners. Across its six outputs of the WHF, the evaluation finds the strongest delivery in training and capacity building, guidelines and standards, and partnership working.

However, the framework's breadth of scope, uneven internal buy-in across other WOAAH teams, and a largely HQ-led model limited translation to country-level / regional implementation. Data collection and surveillance efforts were hampered by fragmented systems and weak incentives for reporting; efficiency of delivery was constrained by highly restricted funding and early capacity gaps.

Given the framework has only been running for five years, and the scale of ambition and the issues it seeks to address, this evaluation was not expecting to find strong evidence of impact yet. That said, most NFPWs have noted examples where the WHF has successfully influenced stakeholders' attitudes or behaviours. There were also several case studies of impact, most notably the framework's response to the outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza.

As with impact, sustainability was not a core focus of this evaluation and more difficult to prove at this stage of delivery. As expected, there was limited evidence of the framework already building long-term sustainability but some early opportunities for this stand out – such as WOAAH's new role as secretariat of the International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade Alliance, which stakeholders see as bringing new momentum and sustained interest in wildlife health.

Looking ahead to the next phase of delivery, the evaluation findings point to the opportunity for a pragmatic pivot: sharpen the WHF's scope to a handful of priorities, shift the focus from guidance to on-the-ground implementation with Members, streamline and incentivise wildlife data reporting, and reset governance and internal communications to embed wildlife health across WOAAH.

Strengthening the financing model to enable more flexible funding support, and focusing future monitoring on uptake and practical outcomes will be key to enhancing the framework's longer-term impact.

## 9. Conclusion and recommendations

### 9.2. Recommendations

#### Practical recommendations for enhanced delivery of the framework

##### 1. Clarify roles of governance and delivery.

- a. **Define governance and roles of the WHF's key groups.** This should involve a re-constitution of the Steering Committee with the inclusion of regional representatives. Position the working group and the CC Network as technical advisers. Establish a quarterly cadence for Steering Committee meetings with a standing agenda (priorities, risks, funding, MEL), and publish a one-page RACI for core tasks.
- b. **Extend the stakeholder mapping to inform WHF delivery.** This should capture: where wildlife authority sits nationally, capacity constraints, existing surveillance assets, and partner footholds. Use the map to target support and select pilot countries or regions for implementation of new WHF initiatives (see below).

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##### 2. Set up and deliver clearer communications for the Wildlife Health Framework.

- a. **Embed the WHF across WOAAH.** All future major WOAAH documents and strategies should include a short "wildlife alignment" paragraph, demonstrating how they interact and reinforce each other. WOAAH could also look to reintroduce 'wildlife champions' across the organisation's departments and in key regions.
- b. **Run a continuous light touch internal comms campaign.** Launch a monthly WHF brief delivered through existing Yammer channels, and an intranet hub with tools and a one-page 'wildlife at WOAAH' narrative.

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##### 3. Strengthen and establish an overall Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) approach for the WHF.

This should include a small number of outcome-focused metrics to track the delivery and impact of the framework. The introduction of quarterly or biannual learning sessions will provide an opportunity to celebrate wins, support real-time reflection and course correction, and share lessons across the WHF team and the wider organisation.

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##### 4. Develop a sustainable funding strategy.

- a. **Conduct donor mapping.** Prioritise donors aligned to each of the priority initiatives (see below), as well as unrestricted/ core funding (where possible). Package 'investable offers', clearly demonstrating outcomes to meet existing and new donors' interests, costs and the return on investment across the WHF's initiatives.
- b. **Build on partnerships and existing positioning.** Leverage WOAAH's Alliance secretariat position to convene fundable workstreams (e.g. market biosecurity, traceability) that deliver WHF priorities. Explore issuing small, output-linked operational grants to CCs to translate guidance into country delivery. Continue to build on existing partnerships, and generally, focus on building on areas where the WHF has made progress.

#### Strategic recommendations for enhanced impact of the framework

##### 1. Localisation in key regions – to support on the ground implementation.

- a. **Launch practical implementation support programmes.** Pilot a series of WHF implementation programmes, including SOPs, that set out how to translate guidance into field action, that is localised for each region.
- b. **Continue and expand training and capacity building.** Further develop and tailor it for local delivery, continuing current modules whilst adding tailored programmes to cover more specific topics (e.g. diagnostics). Where possible, sessions should be opened up to a wider range of stakeholders.
- c. **Incentivise reporting and develop a regional implementation plan.** Configure NG-WHIS in a way that does not penalise Members for reporting disease cases. The interface should also be as user-friendly and low-friction to use as possible, aligning with existing reporting requirements rather than adding another process.

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##### 2. Sharpen the scope to 3-4 priority initiatives across the framework, that respond directly to members' needs.

- a. **Refresh the framework's Theory of Change.** Centre impact outcomes rather than process outcomes.
- b. **Develop a prioritisation method.** Develop criteria that balances resource requirements, feasibility, and Member demand, to help select priority initiatives across the framework. This should be aligned with Members' limited capacity and the evolved funding landscape.
- c. **Continue to focus on integration with other departments.** Embed the new priorities into PVS missions, Standards updates, and regional plans so that the WHF is not perceived as an add-on.

# 10. Appendices

## 10.1. Methodology

All data gathered through the evaluation, across interviews, surveys and desk review, has informed the findings across the evaluation framework, as well as the strategic recommendations for the WHF's next phase.

### Stakeholder interviews

- Firetail conducted 23 interviews with a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders during May and June 2025. Participants included WOAHHQ staff (Capacity building, Communications, Science, Wildlife Team, Engagement and Investment) as well as a Regional Office and external partners such as the One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP), CIC, IUCN, and the Terrestrial Code Commission.
- The interviews followed a semi-structured discussion guide aligned with the evaluation framework, whilst allowing for natural conversation flow and the pursuit of emerging areas of interest.
- All participants were informed of the purpose of the research, how their data will be used, and assured that their responses will remain anonymous in any reporting.
- We organised the qualitative data into a thematic matrix. This method enabled systematic analysis across stakeholder perspectives and the evaluation framework, whilst preserving the nuanced context of individual responses. This approach also enabled the identification of patterns, contradictions and outliers. We then selected the quote that best fit to feature in the report, with other quotes included as an appendix.

### Surveys

#### *WOAH's regional representatives and staff*

- This survey was developed due to budget constraints limiting the number of interviews we could conduct, agreed with WOAHH during the inception phase.
- The purpose of this survey was to reflect the qualitative insights we would have gathered from additional interviews. We designed 5/6 open-ended responses only, with one key question per section of the evaluation framework.

#### *National Focal Points for Wildlife (NFPW)*

- The NFPW survey was designed in two parts to include a survey from BiodiVet, another consultancy concurrently evaluating WOAHH's Wildlife Workshops programme.
- It primarily consists of paired questions: a structured, closed-ended item, such as a Likert-scale rating or a multiple-choice question, immediately followed by an open-ended prompt to capture explanatory or qualitative input. One or two standalone open-ended questions have been included to solicit richer and more detailed reflections.
- The NFPW survey has been disseminated to respondents in English, French and Spanish to ensure a high response rate. Given the response volume (<200), the dataset will not support inferential statistical analysis or hypothesis testing (e.g. chi-squared tests for association). This means the survey response data cannot be used to reject or fail to reject any null hypotheses.
- Instead, Firetail has delivered a descriptive analysis of the quantitative responses, summarising distributions, central tendencies, and patterns in the data without making causal claims. All findings are supported by clear, accessible visualisations for each key variable. This also includes analysis of the responses based on independent variables such as the region or sector of the respondent.
- The qualitative data from open-ended responses has undergone thematic analysis, aligned with the approach used for interview data. This process incorporated the use of AI-enabled summarisation tools for initial synthesis, with all outputs reviewed and validated by the Firetail project team to ensure rigour and interpretive accuracy.

## 8. Appendices

### 10.2. High-level benchmarking of key organisations in the global wildlife health sector

Organisation	Organisational model	Core focus	Role in wildlife / One Health / zoonotic disease
<b>WHO</b> (World Health Organization)	UN agency	Human health	Central to global One Health approach (Quadripartite Member, Secretariat for the High-Level Expert Panel). As Secretariat, WHO works to support One Health related activities, coordinate interagency engagement and partnership, WHO internal One Health workplans, and facilitate multiple initiatives on One Health to reduce fragmentation. <sup>49</sup> WHO's role in the Quadripartite is primarily to identify, monitor, and prevent disease in humans. <sup>50</sup>
<b>FAO</b> (Food and Agriculture Organization)	UN agency	Food security, agriculture, livestock	Central to global One Health approach (Quadripartite Member). FAO aims to "eliminate hunger, promote food security, food safety and healthy diets, prevent and control transboundary diseases, zoonoses and AMR, to protect the livelihoods of farmers from the impacts of plant and animal diseases" to ensure sustainability and resilience of agrifood systems, with One Health benefits. <sup>51</sup> FAO is part of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW). <sup>52</sup>
<b>WOAH</b> (World Organisation for Animal Health) (formerly OIE)	Intergovernmental organisation	Animal health	Central to global One Health approach (Quadripartite Member). Focuses on animal health and welfare, and a key player in zoonotic disease monitoring and control (e.g., rabies, avian influenza). <sup>53</sup> Drives animal disease surveillance and reporting via WAHIS. Part of the CPW and the International Alliance Against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade – for which it will host the secretariat from January 2026. <sup>54</sup>
<b>UNEP</b> (United Nations Environment Programme)	UN agency	Environment and ecosystems	Central to global One Health approach (Quadripartite Member). Focuses on environmental drivers of disease, including climate change, land use, biodiversity, pollution and waste. <sup>55</sup> UNEP is part of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW) and the International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade. <sup>56</sup>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.who.int/teams/one-health-initiative/quadripartite-secretariat-for-one-health/one-health-joint-plan-of-action>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240059139>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.fao.org/about/about-fao/en/>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.fao.org/one-health/overview/one-health-overview/en>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.woah.org/en/who-we-are/>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/global-initiatives/one-health/>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.unep.org/who-we-are/about-us>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.unep.org/topics/chemicals-and-pollution-action/pollution-and-health/unep-one-health>

## 8. Appendices

<b>CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species)</b>	Multilateral treaty	Wildlife trade regulation	Regulates international trade in endangered species, with an indirect role in zoonotic risk by addressing illegal/unregulated wildlife markets and trafficking. Maintains relationships with other relevant organisations such as WOAAH, FAO, WHO. <sup>57</sup> CITES is also part of the CPW. <sup>58</sup>
<b>TRAFFIC</b>	Non-governmental organisation	Wildlife trade monitoring	NGO focusing on legal and sustainable wildlife trade. Provides wildlife trade data and policy advice to governments, multilateral organisations, and partners. <sup>59</sup> Conducted USAID-funded Wildlife TRAPS project with IUCN and others on reducing zoonotic disease risks from wildlife trade through operationalising the One Health approach. TRAFFIC also forms part of the CPW and the International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade. <sup>60</sup>
<b>IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)</b>	Intergovernmental organisation	Conservation science and policy	IUCN is an environmental network comprised of thousands of Member organisations and experts, focused on nature conservation and sustainable use. <sup>61</sup> Maintains Red List of Threatened Species which assesses global extinction risk. Focusing on species and ecosystem health to achieve One Health. Part of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW) and the International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade. <sup>62</sup> IUCN is a strategic partner of WOAAH, with the two organisations signing a memorandum of understanding.

Other important organisations, associations and initiatives operating in the space include the World Bank, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), and CIFOR.

<sup>57</sup> <https://cites.org/eng/disc/what.php>

<sup>58</sup> [https://cites.org/eng/topics/role\\_of\\_CITES\\_in\\_reducing\\_risk\\_of\\_future\\_zoonotic\\_disease](https://cites.org/eng/topics/role_of_CITES_in_reducing_risk_of_future_zoonotic_disease)

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.traffic.org/about-us/mission/>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.traffic.org/news/how-traffic-has-applied-one-health-approaches-to-wildlife-trade-challenges/>

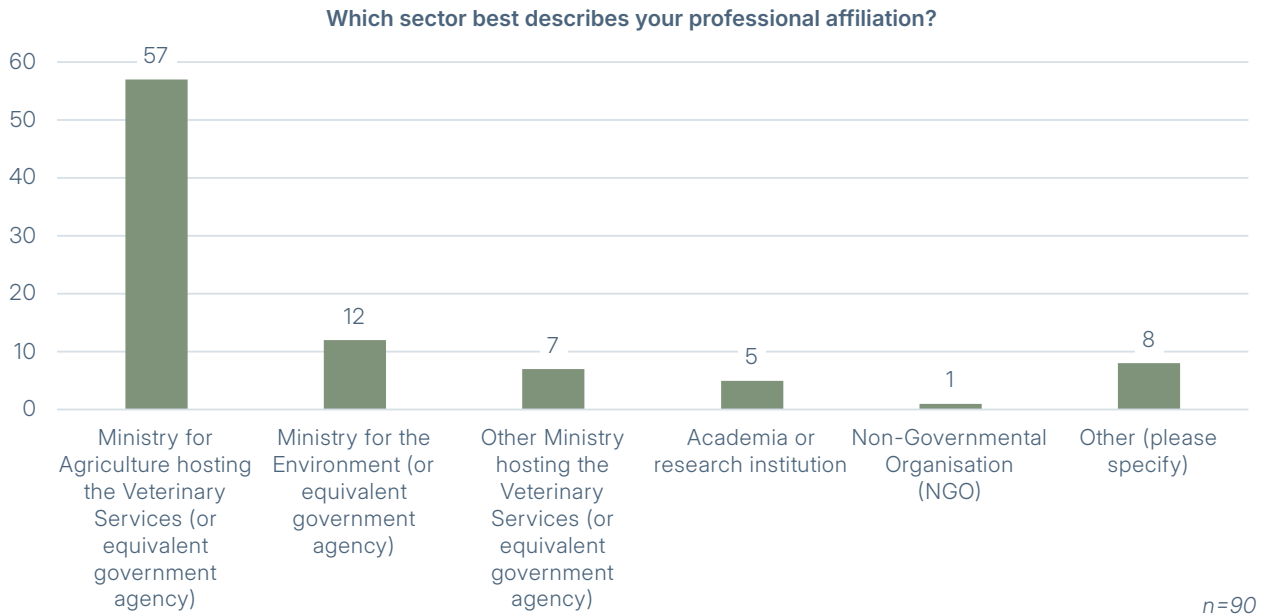
<sup>61</sup> <https://iucn.org/about-iucn>

<sup>62</sup> <https://iucn.org/story/202410/iucn-and-woah-publish-new-guidelines-disease-surveillance-better-protect-wildlife>

## 8. Appendices

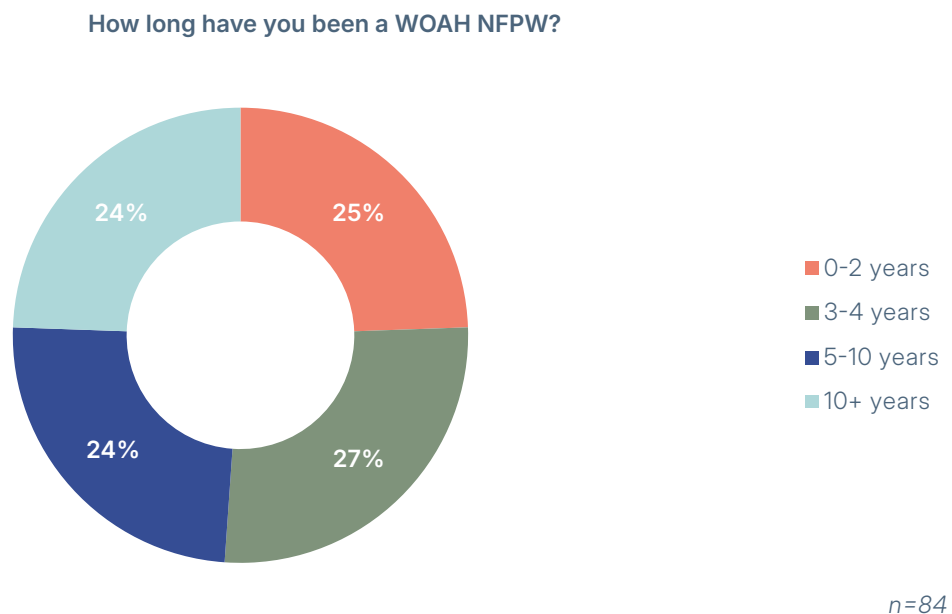
### 10.3. National Focal Points for Wildlife survey– respondent profiles

Figure 7: NFPW survey question – professional sector affiliation



**Other (please specify) responses:** State Veterinary Administration, Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities (hosting the Wildlife Authority), Ministry of Tourism (Wildlife Conservation Authority), Ministry of National Development, Ministry of Livestock and Rural Development, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, and Ministry of Forestry Economy (in charge of wildlife).

Figure 8: NFPW survey question – length of tenure as an NFPW



## 8. Appendices

### 10.4. Additional supporting evidence

#### Relevance

##### 3.1.1.

"There was a spike of interest in wildlife health in 2020. Primarily because it was the early stages of the pandemic. There were certain concerns at that point of time that wildlife might have been involved in it, though nobody knew at that point." [WHF insider]

"Of course, at that time, we were facing the Covid 19 pandemic and the role of animal or wildlife, but also the informal markets of where you can sell different life animals were strongly highlighted at that time." [Other internal]

"I think the pandemic made the former DG realise, ok we really need to integrate the health and disease of wild animals into the mix because it's also part of our mandate. So when the pandemic hit, that's when the WHF was developed." [WHF insider]

##### 3.1.2.

"I would say that most of the things we were asked to do as Members was to report on the animal disease status, differentiated between domestic animals and wildlife but not in a consistent way or as a strong requirement. More like if you have this information, you can provide it." [WHF insider]

"The old WAHIS was focusing a lot on collecting data but not enough on disseminating it. So we were actually rebuilding the whole new vision to try to disseminate data through different alerts through different extractions." [Other internal]

"We really tried to promote wildlife disease reporting. But the platform has changed a bit. So WAHIS no longer includes wildlife and WAHIS-Wild then was replaced by WAHIS-Wild Beta and then I think Beta hasn't really worked. And so that's been a bit difficult for us." [Other internal]

##### 3.1.3.

"We had stakeholder analysis so we gave them a sense of ownership in that sense. We approached a lot of stakeholders. So we did talk to different departments internally. We also spoke to other stakeholders externally as well." [WHF insider]

"So we had a series of consultations with the Delegates trying to see what their priorities were, starting with the framework and then building on that to pinpoint a few key activities that we could support." [Other internal]

"So when they were first developing it, they actually reached out to us to provide inputs to it through the development." [External partner]

##### 3.2.1.

"So from a management perspective I think it's important to note that otherwise I think and the wildlife working group told us at the beginning it was too ambitious- I mean too many activities, I think maybe it was not realistic but also I felt that at the moment we needed something big enough." [WHF insider]

"WOAH traditionally was created to ensure safe international trade of domestic animal. This is the historical mandate. And when I joined, I felt like having this wildlife health framework was some type of excuse or some type of proof that we are doing something on wildlife." [WHF insider]

"It seemed to be like 'throw everything at it, including the kitchen sink'. I think it was just like 'let's do everything that would be good.'" [WHF insider]

"We are the World Organization for Animal Health. I don't care if it's a seagull or a chicken." [Other internal]

"We weren't very clear on the direction that we wanted to take with wildlife health because historically the organisation has really been very focussed on trade and livestock health and disease." [Other internal]

### 3.2.2.

"WOAH is more an organisation that works in the response way and not in upstream prevention." [WHF insider]

"We should work on prevention, understanding the drivers, why this spill-over is happening, how we can prevent it, or at least minimise the risk or the likelihood of that happening." [Other internal]

"The framework doesn't really acknowledge the realities of what actually influences wildlife health [...] It's not just zoonotic pathogens that matter, it's also pollution, it's white nose syndrome, it's chemical exposures to mercury, the impacts of mining on wildlife [...]" [External partner]

## Coherence

### 4.1.1.

"So it does seem like we've moved away from just being like 'oh take care of your livestock because wildlife may infect them'. I think we've expanded the narrative from more than that." [WHF insider]

"I think we need to have more sensitisation on why we are working in this space, including within our organisation." [Other internal]

"The framework created a need to be present in that discussion associated also with more important in the quadripartite agenda. I think that drove WOA to become more consistent and more organised, more visible in this arena. And I think the framework did the job and was positive because we did manage to occupy the space that we play in... Before, there was not that force to the topic." [Other insider]

"I think it has done a great job of firmly planting the seed in the organisation and in perpetuity, right." [External partner]

"Just having the wildlife health framework there is a statement of change, which is very, very welcomed by us." [External partner]

### 4.1.2.

"I think one of the strong achievements was reviving our long-term partnerships but also creating new ones as I said with wildlife conservation society for example." [WHF insider]

"If you look across multilateral organisations, this would be the first global institutional framework which can provide some scientific support for wildlife health at a global scale. So that's something that can bring to the table in a partnership with other multilateral organizations that those organisations don't have." [WHF insider]

"And no other international organisation really has a mandate to deal with wildlife health. You have others that deal with wildlife conservation, but not wildlife health. So we saw it both as an opportunity and a responsibility to expand our wildlife health programme." [WHF insider]

"We've managed to raise our profile and show that we were able to - so I would even say that we have more recognition from external partners than internally in WOA, like our external partners more and more consider us as a robust player on the wildlife health landscape." [Other internal]

### 4.1.4.

"The WOA framework is very top down. If you have something that's so comprehensive but it's top down it's going to have so many bottlenecks." [WHF insider]

"With the implementation I think it's very Francocentric the whole wildlife team is French. So the implementation is going to follow that culture and it works in some places of the world and it doesn't work in some places of the world. So that's a whole challenge. I think the design of the document is also very Francocentric and that's why maybe the implementation becomes problem that way." [WHF insider]

"It's been a struggle to get adoption of this framework into policy, decision making and management actions. When I approach and discuss this with the veterinary services, the, you know, the livestock health sector, the wildlife is not a problem for them. So there may be superficially supportive, but it's not going to be something that's going to necessarily take lead on or adopt. When I go to the wildlife services, the wildlife health community, I think the challenge is, well, it doesn't have the reputation amongst that community for them to feel like they have any sort of buy in or trust in the framework that's being developed." [WHF insider]

"Most of the activities that I remember in the framework are for WOA headquarters, they are for WOA staff, WOA people, not for the vets or the wild health officers in the countries." [Other internal]

"I think some of the outputs are quite specific for headquarters. Obviously we're not developing guidelines and things in the region, but when we have those, we can promote them. So I think it's really helped us to see what headquarters would like us to focus on, to see what direction to take." [Other internal]

"While the Framework provides global guidance, there is limited localisation to reflect regional ecological and socio-political contexts. For example, in Jordan and Lebanon, threats like habitat fragmentation and informal wildlife trade are not sufficiently addressed by existing WOAHS tools." [Other internal]

"While the Framework provides global guidance, there is limited localization to reflect regional ecological and socio-political contexts. For example, in Jordan and Lebanon, threats like habitat fragmentation and informal wildlife trade are not sufficiently addressed by existing WOAHS tools." [Other internal]

"That's the challenge when you build up these frameworks, is that you need the capacity and the funding the resources to implement them. I think that has been a bit the challenge over the last five years and led to a piece meal approach because I don't think there were a lot of core funding resources from the organisation." [External partner]

#### **4.2.3.**

"I would say that there is an intrinsic philosophical disagreement between the wildlife team and the livestock team because the core functioning of livestock traditionally looks at wildlife as a threat to livestock health and the wildlife team looks at livestock as being the big brother." [WHF insider]

"We kind of think that health is under the area of expertise of WOAHS but wildlife health is a unique field, even the staff at WOAHS don't really have any wildlife health expertise." [WHF insider]

### **Effectiveness**

#### **5.1.2.**

"But the paradox we are a standard setting organisation. We don't have country offices like FAO or have in every single country. So we are not with veterinary services on a daily basis. And the way we work is that we provide guidance, standards and policies. But this is the responsibility of the country to actually implement them and do them." [WHF insider]

"We did come up with some guidelines how much it's being used I'm not sure on the field might be too high level for practical application but theoretically it's being quoted so at least theoretically it's useful." [WHF insider]

"I guess from the resource mobilisation side, we were a little bit more on the brakes saying we might have issues providing that funding sustainably over the years for the alliance." [WHF insider]

"I think there's still a pending gap there in how to put those in a practical place closer to the user." [Other internal]

"This framework didn't arrive to most of the countries, I don't think that this framework has arrived to the persons in charge of wildlife and the national basis... and something that we need, and the Delegate and head of the vet services needs, is to have two, three really powerful arguments that you can tell to the minister in five minutes and would make sense to a veterinarian, but also to a politician, of why to care and put more efforts on wildlife." [Other internal]

#### **5.1.3.**

"They regard this information as highly sensitive because when a country reports, there are, for example trading bans or trading barriers or other countries become really protective and stop trading with the country." [WHF insider]

"The problem is that turnover of focal points in a WOAHS is very high. So each two years they keep changing the people. So imagining training it's quite impactful. There is no consistency on the reporting behaviour and even the transfer of knowledge between one previous person and new persons is not happening." [Other internal]

"There's still an outdated perception that reporting sets you back. I think it needs to be turned around into initial report and then confirm that it is to understand its scope not immediate 'oh you're being struck from the books in terms of being able to trade.'" [External partner]

"The big challenge is obviously resource mobilisation. We're purely project funded. So we don't have money to do what we want. We have to get the projects to do it." [External partner]

### 5.2.1.

"Having diversity of thought is very important while designing the next framework, especially if you want to implement it around the world. And it's not just reaching out to stakeholders and asking them but actually involving them in the process right from the start as equal stakeholders, getting more diversity to the team." [WHF insider]

"I think that they're only hearing from some groups and I think that's somewhere that they could sit down and say, 'Look, we have big gaps. Can you survey your different specialist groups or maybe do targeted outreach and... just are we missing something really big and maybe do that periodically every year or two years just to be a little bit more balanced because otherwise they're just hearing from a few specific groups.'" [External partner]

### 5.2.2.

"I mean coming from an NGO previously, and working in an NGO now, I totally see how that bias of what you care about and it's not really reflective of the needs of the countries or even what will resonate with a minister or with a Focal point. I think fundamentally changing how it's written and the audience will make it much more effective." [External partner]

## Efficiency

### 6.1.3.

"We built a temporary system but the engagement of countries in reporting information to this system was very low. But on the other side, there were no real efforts on our side to push for countries to use this system." [WHF insider]

"When I came two years ago the governance was a little bit redundant. So the working group on wildlife was supposed to be an advocacy body for the wildlife health framework but from time to time they had some type of parallel initiatives instead of one advocacy body for a global program. So that was I think a little bit unclear and at times redundant at the beginning and I see that this is a little bit more clarified now." [WHF insider]

"What's your benefit of reporting wildlife data. It actually either brings you trouble or nothing happens. But there's no incentive. So I think we need to find a solution to incentivise reporting wildlife health data." [Other internal]

## Impact

### 7.1.1.

"I would say what I definitely see a gap in, and this is a big frustration, is other colleagues at WOAHP who are wonderful, wonderful people and do great work but it's like two separate organisations. I think the wildlife program is still so siloed and it doesn't come up." [Other internal]

### 7.2.2.

"So it has definitely created new thinking or some behavioural changes, not at the grassroots level but at the top level and donors have also they started investing into this - and what I see may not be direct but indirect impact are some new initiatives." [WHF insider]

"There's certainly an increasing interest from veterinarians with regard to wildlife related issues, which I did not expect." [External partner]

## Sustainability

### 8.1.1.

"I think there's a big opportunity now for WOAHP with the International Alliance secretariat they got from GIZ, because it puts them in a lead position as the secretariat to mobilise the network they wanted to mobilise within the Wildlife Health Framework. But it will take a structured approach, it will take resources, but I think it's a good time to review your five-year framework in light of managing the secretariat and seeing where the framework could play a key role." [External partner]

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