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WVA Position on Zoonoses Emergence in Relation to Wildlife Disruption and Trade

BACKGROUND:

Zoonotic disease emergence is an urgent global health and international security concern.¹ Zoonotic disease transmission is associated with human-animal interactions, including consumption of food of wildlife origin. Namely, zoonotic disease emergence is associated with increased human-wildlife interactions, often in conjunction with disturbed and degraded wildlife habitats.^{2,3,4,5} Outbreaks and pandemics have resulted from the spillover of pathogens from animals to humans including SARS-CoV-2, Ebola virus, Nipah virus, SARS-CoV, MERS-CoV, and avian and swine influenzas.^{6,7,8} These recent emergences of novel human-animal pathogens are often associated with a wildlife reservoir, as well as wildlife-domestic animal interactions.⁹ The cost to curtail disease epidemics and pandemics is considerable, as they impact not just the health sector, but all other sectors of society, affecting livelihoods and food security, trade, travel and hospitality, education, national and international security, and entire national economies, especially in poor countries. These sequelae were confirmed upon the outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, which has been both socially and economically devastating.

WVA POSITION:

Wildlife habitat encroachment and wildlife trade are human activities that could be managed. As public health advocates and custodians of animal health and welfare, veterinarians should advocate for the establishment of feasible controls on wildlife marketing through enhanced public awareness, and the promotion of sustainable biodiversity management and enforcement of agreements, laws and regulations. Members are encouraged to engage in multisectoral-multidisciplinary, One Health networks and support the global initiative on [Preventing the Next Pandemic](#). Governments and whole-of-society are encouraged to collaborate on introducing reforms that address detrimental human activities. The WVA encourages the prevention of criminal activities driving wildlife trafficking networks and the reformation of markets that allow illegal trade in live animals. Other underlying drivers of detrimental human behaviours that the veterinary profession may address, such as food insecurity, should be recognized and attended to. The WVA calls for increased funding for transdisciplinary research to close information gaps. Novel advocacies and approaches, such as early education on One Health concepts and development of One Health operational tools, should be supported by veterinary professionals and institutions. Early detection of novel pathogens through continuing disease surveillance at the animal-human-ecosystem interface should be strengthened.

- ¹ Safeguarding human health in the Anthropocene epoch: report of The Rockefeller Foundation–*Lancet* Commission on planetary health Sarah Whitmee, Andy Haines, Chris Beyrer, Frederick Boltz, Anthony G Capon, Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Alex Ezeh, Howard Frumkin, Peng Gong, Peter Head, Richard Horton, Georgina M Mace, Robert Marten, Samuel S Myers, Sania Nishtar, Steven A Osofsky, Subhrendu K Pattanayak, Montira J Pongsiri, Cristina Romanelli, Agnes Soucat, Jeanette Vega, Derek Yach, *The Lancet* 2015, Vol. 386: 1973–2028 July 16, 2015. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(15\)60901-1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)60901-1)
- ² Leroy EM, Epelboin A, Mondonge V, et al. Human Ebola outbreak resulting from direct exposure to fruit bats in Luebo, Democratic Republic of Congo, 2007. *Vector Borne Zoonotic Dis* 2009; 9: 723–28.
- ³ Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. Human health: ecosystem regulation of infectious diseases. In: Patz JA, Confalonieri U, eds. *Ecosystems and human well-being: current status and trends*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2005.
- ⁴ CBD–WHO. *Connecting global priorities: biodiversity and human health, a state of knowledge review*. 2015. <https://www.cbd.int/health/SOK-biodiversity-en.pdf> (accessed June 6, 2015).
- ⁵ Aguirre AA (December 2017). "Changing Patterns of Emerging Zoonotic Diseases in Wildlife, Domestic Animals, and Humans Linked to Biodiversity Loss and Globalization". *ILAR Journal*. 58 (3): 315–318. [doi:10.1093/ilar/ilx035](https://doi.org/10.1093/ilar/ilx035). [PMID 29253148](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29253148/).
- ⁶ Jones KE, Patel NG, Levy MA, et al. Global trends in emerging infectious diseases. *Nature* 2008; 451: 990–93.
- ⁷ Rouquet P, Froment JM, Bermejo M, et al. Wild animal mortality monitoring and human Ebola outbreaks, Gabon and Republic of Congo, 2001–2003. *Emerg Infect Dis* 2005; 11: 283–90.
- ⁸ Pulliam JR, Epstein JH, Dushoff J, et al. Agricultural intensification, priming for persistence and the emergence of Nipah virus: a lethal bat-borne zoonosis. *J R Soc Interface* 2012; 9: 89–101.
- ⁹ Zoonoses (Project 1) *Wildlife/domestic livestock interactions: A final report to the Department for International Development, UK*. The International Livestock Research Institute, Nairobi & Royal Veterinary College, London. Report editors: Delia Grace and Bryony Jones, 2011