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# Wildlife Health Surveillance in the Philippines

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## South-East Asia Wildlife Health Network Meeting

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## Status of wildlife disease surveillance

- There is Republic Act 9147, also known as the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act of 2001
- After the Wildlife Disease Surveillance Conceptual Framework was developed by BMB in 2018 in response to the Malacañang AO #10 (enacted in 2011) and Joint Administrative Order 2020-02
  - Mostly passive surveillance (no on-going outbreaks) activities have been conducted; but site selected had previous cases among domestic animals
  - The Las Piñas-Paranaque Wetlands/Critical Habitat (managed by DENR-NCR) has similarly developed their local Avian Influenza Preparedness Plan, in consultation with BMB, BAI, UP Manila and other concerned stakeholders
  - A bird sanctuary in Sultan Kudarat (managed by DENR Region 12) has also conducted screening for avian influenza in coordination with the LGU and BAI



# Status of wildlife disease surveillance

- Funds for the conduct of wildlife disease surveillance is incorporated in the annual Work and Financial Plan
- Agencies involved in the surveillance activities:
  - Bureau of Animal Industry – for additional manpower, if necessary
  - BAI-Animal Disease Diagnostic and Reference Laboratory – for laboratory examination of the samples
  - University of the Philippines (Diliman and Los Baños), Institute of Biology – for taxonomist

# Status of wildlife disease surveillance

- All samples collected were from wildlife in their natural habitat (catch and release program)
- All samples were submitted to the BAI-Animal Disease Diagnostic and Reference Laboratory for examination
- The laboratory results are always conveyed to concerned offices for information and reference, including the BAI (National Focal Point for Animal Disease Notification) and the Department of Health
  - As necessary, the focal point submits and reports to the WAHIS
- At present, database (in MS Excel) on results of wildlife disease surveillance are kept in the BMB
- The procedures on the conduct of wildlife disease surveillance is intended to be further developed into a policy for reference and use of DENR Regional and Field Offices





## Summary of activities conducted since development of the WDS Framework

Date	Location	Number of samples	Test conducted	Results
March 2018	San Luis, Pampanga	62 birds, 13 species	RT-PCR, ELISA for Avian influenza virus, Newcastle disease, Infectious laryngotracheitis	Negative
November 2018	San Luis, Pampanga	58 birds, 12 species	RT-PCR for Avian influenza virus	Negative
April 2019	Las Piñas-Paranaque Wetlands, Metro Manila	60 birds, 22 species	RT-PCR for Avian influenza virus	Negative
August 2019	Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro	83 bats, 5 species	RT-PCR, ELISA for Ebola Reston virus	Negative
November 2021	Cabusao wetlands, Camarines Sur	28 birds, 9 species	RT-PCR for Avian influenza virus	Negative
December 2021	Zamboanga City	40 samples, 2 species	RT-PCR for Avian influenza virus	Negative
February 2022	Candaba, Pampanga	48 birds, 11 species *3 water samples	RT-PCR for Avian influenza virus	Negative
August 2022	Batangas City	78 samples, 2 species	RT-PCR for Avian influenza virus	Negative

\*African Swine Fever in wild pigs



# Constraints and Problems

- Appreciation and understanding of the One Health and zoonosis concepts
- Logistics and resources: manpower and funds
- Availability of laboratory to accommodate the samples in the regions
- Effective information-sharing



# Networks at Country Level

- There exists a One Health coordination mechanism, that is the Philippine Inter-Agency Committee on Zoonosis
  - Composed of Departments of Health, Agriculture and Environment and Natural Resources
- In March 2021, the University of the Philippines – Los Baños created and launched the Program for Zoonotic Diseases
  - “The program envisions to be a leading zoonotic diseases research and knowledge resource center in Asia contributing to the advancement of One Health through disease prevention and management. Its mission is to enhance capacities on zoonotic diseases detection, prevention, and response to outbreaks in protecting animal and human populations.”



# Capacity Building

- In March 2022, the BMB conducted an orientation on One Health, various local policies on zoonoses and the conduct of wildlife disease surveillance on a hybrid platform
  - The participants were DENR Regional and Field Officers
  - The resource persons invited were from WOA, BAI and WHO
- The DENR-BMB has been attending consultation meetings organized by the ASEAN-USAID Partnership for Regional Optimization within the Political-Security and Socio-Cultural Communities (PROSPECT) to develop the ASEAN Regional Strategy for Preventing Transmission of Zoonotic Diseases from Wildlife Trade







# Future activities

- In the next 12 months, capacity building on risk assessment and risk management at the human-domestic and wildlife interface and risk communication are priority topics needed
- Priority activities relating to wildlife health for 2022-2023
  - Conduct of regional wildlife disease surveillance at prioritized sites
  - Continue capacity-building of field staff on zoonosis, proper response/s to wildlife mortalities and specimen collection
  - Expand awareness campaigns on wildlife conservation: to include concept of One Health and disease transmission especially in the domestic/livestock and wildlife interface
  - Based on available data and past accomplished activities, prepare guidelines on the conduct of wildlife disease surveillance (applying best practices) for approval of top management and dissemination and implementation to all DENR offices
  - Continue establishing/creating networks with concerned agencies to facilitate conduct of surveillance and examination of samples



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Thank you for your kind attention.