

WOAH Regional Wildlife Health Network for Asia and the Pacific

Terms of Reference

1. Background

- a. The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE) considers disease surveillance in wild animals—including both terrestrial and aquatic species—to be just as important as surveillance in domestic animals. Pathogens in wild animals are important to domestic animal health, to trade in animals and animal products, to human health and to wild animal populations themselves, which often have very high economic, social and cultural value. Surveillance especially at the interface of human-animal-ecosystems has become necessary given the increasing interaction between species and the threat it poses to emergence of novel infectious diseases.
- b. The WOAH Wildlife Health Framework envisages both the organisation and its Members drawing on and enhancing existing networks towards the overall goal of protecting wildlife health worldwide to achieve One Health. Through such networks, One Health, multi-sectoral collaboration and capacity for wildlife health management, monitoring and surveillance systems can be strengthened. Networks can be used to increase awareness and knowledge of risk pathways, and best practices in wildlife health management.
- c. Since 2021, wildlife health stakeholders have been networking across the Asia and the Pacific Region (the Region) to share information about wildlife. Sub-regional wildlife health networks meet regularly to discuss key issues and work together to protect wildlife health for One Health. WOAH Focal Points for Wildlife are key members in these networks.
- d. In February 2023, WOAH Focal Points for Wildlife met in Bangkok, Thailand, and agreed to form a WOAH Regional Wildlife Health Network for Asia and the Pacific (the Network).

2. **Purpose:** To provide a platform to facilitate effective sharing of information, expertise and advocacy to promote the wildlife health agenda in the Region.

3. Objectives

- a. To establish a network of wildlife experts across the Region to facilitate exchange of knowledge and expertise
- b. To support wildlife disease surveillance and prompt reporting to global information systems across the Region
- c. Capacity building and sharing of best practices for wildlife health in the Region
- d. To promote a One Health approach towards wildlife health in the Region
- e. To enhance communication, including but not limited to members in the Region, members of the WOAHSub-regional Wildlife Health Networks, WOAHS in the Region and at headquarters, and other wildlife experts globally including the WOAHS Working Group on Wildlife and WOAHS Reference Centres

4. Terms of Reference

a. Governance and responsibilities

- i. The World Organisation for Animal Health Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific (WOAHS RRAP) will act as Technical Secretariat in coordination with the WOAHS Sub-Regional Representation for South-East Asia (WOAHS SRR-SEA). The Technical Secretariat will provide guidance to the Network based on direction from WOAHS headquarters. The Technical Secretariat will support the Network Secretariat to coordinate between WOAHS Focal Points for Wildlife (and other WOAHS contact points as necessary) and organize, facilitate, and provide logistical support for events and meetings.
- ii. Representative(s) from one WOAHS Member will hold the position of Network Secretariat for an initial 5-year period, with reassessment and agreement by the Network after 3 years, before fixing a rotating basis. The Network Secretariat will plan and coordinate activities in the Network according to WOAHS direction—including alignment with the WOAHS Wildlife Health Framework—and needs of Network members. The Network Secretariat will liaise with Secretariats of the Sub-regional Wildlife Health Networks. The Network Secretariat will maintain a list of Network members and undertake regular monitoring and evaluation of the Network (M&E framework to be developed with WOAHS). The Network Secretariat will share the members' list,

monitoring and evaluation data, and an activity report to the Technical Secretariat on an annual basis.

- iii. The Focal Point for Wildlife from one WOAHA Member in the Region will hold the position of Network Chair on an annually rotating basis. The Network Chair will support the Network Secretariat, including by planning and coordination of activities in the Network.
- iv. The Deputy Network Chair will support the Network Chair, taking the position of Network Chair after one year. This position will be held by another Focal Point for Wildlife from one WOAHA Member in the Region.

b. Membership

- i. Membership of the Network will include a representative from each WOAHA Member in the Region. In general, this will be the WOAHA Focal Point for Wildlife; an alternate may be nominated by the WOAHA Delegate or WOAHA Focal Point for Wildlife in their country/territory.
- ii. Other WOAHA Focal Points may be members as approved by the Technical and Network Secretariat.
- iii. Other relevant stakeholders from the Region or other regions may be included on an ad hoc basis upon agreement of the Network members.

c. Mode of operation

i. Funding

1. Voluntary financial contributions to WOAHA will be used when possible to support face to face meetings. Members may be requested to participate at their own cost when funding is not available. The Network Secretariat and Network Chair may investigate other sources of funding to support members.

ii. Meetings

1. Digital consultations such as email and video conferencing will be organised between face to face meetings. A regular virtual meeting should take place biannually. The Technical Secretariat will support the Network Secretariat and Network Chair logistically. Where possible, a quorum



should be established to ensure representation at the meetings.

2. A face-to-face meeting should take place every 1-2 years and be hosted by WOAHP Members on a rotation when possible. The hosting Member will provide logistical support such as identifying meeting location, hotel, transport in coordination with the Network Secretariat and Network Chair as well as provide additional technical input to the agenda and running of the meeting. Agenda and invitations of face-to-face meetings will be sent by the Technical Secretariat upon agreement of the hosting Member.
3. Summary minutes and recommendations of meetings will be prepared by the Network Secretariat and Network Chair, circulated to Network members and published on the WOAHP Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific website.