

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ONE HEALTH HIGH LEVEL EXPERT PANEL (OHHLEP)

These Terms of Reference for the One Health High Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) are agreed to by the Tripartite (FAO, OIE and WHO) plus UNEP, collectively referred to as the “Partners”, whose respective mandates are as follows:

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (“FAO”) is the leading organization within the United Nations system in the field of food and agriculture, and has as a major area of focus of its global mandate improving nutrition, increasing agricultural productivity, raising the standard of living in rural populations, and contributing to global economic growth, worldwide;

The World Organisation for Animal Health (“OIE”) is the intergovernmental organisation responsible, inter alia, for developing international standards in animal health, veterinary public health, zoonoses and animal welfare, ensuring transparent dissemination of official information on animal health status, and strengthening veterinary services;

The United Nations Environment Programme (“UNEP”) is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations System, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment; and

The World Health Organization (“WHO”) is the directing and coordinating authority on international health work within the United Nations system and provides leadership, inter alia, on improving nutrition, promoting safe, healthy and sustainable diets and preventing zoonotic disease, through science based guidance and technical support to countries.

I. PURPOSE

1. Recognizing the complex and multidisciplinary issues raised by the interface of human, animal and ecosystem health (“One Health”) that require enhanced coordination and collaboration among sectors and agencies, nationally and internationally, the One Health High-Level Expert Panel (“OHHLEP”) provides guidance on One Health-related matters that support improved cooperation among governments.
2. The OHHLEP’s advice will support the work performed by the Partners in the framework of their One Health collaboration.
3. The OHHLEP has an advisory role to the Partners and is expected to provide advice to the Partners to support their provision of evidence-based scientific and policy advice to address the challenges raised by One Health. OHHLEP operates independently from the Global Leaders Group (GLG) on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and the Independent Panel on Evidence for Action Against AMR. The Partner with the lead responsibility for providing secretariat services to the OHHLEP as described under paragraph 21 shall ensure appropriate coordination and exchange of information between OHHLEP and these AMR bodies, as well as other initiatives set up under the Tripartite collaboration. including circulating the findings and reports, as appropriate..

II. AREAS OF FOCUS AND FUNCTIONS

4. The areas of focus of the OHHLEP will be subject to regular review by the Partners. The OHHLEP will initially focus on: 1) providing policy relevant scientific assessment on the emergence of health crises arising from the human-animal-ecosystem interface, and research gaps; and 2) guidance on development of a long term strategic approach to reducing risk of zoonotic pandemics, with an associated monitoring and early warning framework, and the synergies needed to institutionalize and implement the One Health approach, including in areas that drive pandemic risk. The OHHLEP's advice will contribute to enhancing strategic orientations and coordination, and to providing high political visibility on the subject of One Health.

5. The OHHLEP will perform the following functions:

- a) To provide advice on the analysis of scientific evidence on the links between human, animal and ecosystem health, and contribute to foresight on emerging threats to health;
- b) To provide advice on better understanding of the impacts of food systems (including agriculture, livestock farming and trade, wildlife hunting and trade, aquaculture, animal products processing, handling, distribution and consumer practices) and ecological and environmental factors that may be contributing to zoonotic disease emergence/re-emergence and spillover events;
- c) To contribute to the One Health research agenda setting and propose, advise on and review approaches and specific studies relevant to the development of a global approach to reduce risk of zoonotic pandemics;
- d) To provide advice by invitation on One Health policy response in relevant member countries; and
- e) To provide recommendations on specific issues identified by the Partners in the areas of highest concern for attention and action, and future directions, in One Health.

6. Reports of each meeting containing recommendations of OHHLEP shall be addressed to the respective Heads of the Partners. The OHHLEP Experts will seek to agree on the recommendations to be reflected in its reports. If, in exceptional circumstances, they are unable to agree on a particular issue, minority views may be reflected in the meeting report when requested by the Expert concerned. The Partners shall decide on the actions to be taken regarding any advice or recommendations made by the OHHLEP. The outputs of the OHHLEP are jointly owned by the Partners. Without prejudice to the advisory nature of OHHLEP recommendations, regular updates of OHHLEP activities shall normally be published on the Partners' websites and/or communicated to the public in other forms, as appropriate.

III. MEMBERSHIP

Expertise and status of the Experts

7. The OHHLEP will have up to 20 Experts who shall serve in their personal capacities to represent the broad range of disciplines relevant to One Health, and in science and policy-related sectors and disciplines relevant to the tasks of the OHHLEP, and in particular in the following fields:

- emerging infectious diseases and zoonoses;
- viral diversity, surveillance and risk assessment for emerging pandemic threats;
- infectious disease epidemiology, prevention and control;
- biodiversity, wildlife and ecosystems health;
- health systems policy and practice and pandemic preparedness;
- food systems and their interlinkages with health;
- social, economic and behavioural sciences relating to One Health;
- disciplines in informatics, modelling, prediction and foresight relevant to assessing impacts of environmental and other changes on emerging diseases and health;
- climate and environment.

8. Experts must respect the impartiality and independence required by the Partners. They must be free of any real, potential or apparent conflicts of interest. OHHLEP Experts have an ongoing obligation to disclose any interests, real or perceived, that may give rise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest.

9. OHHLEP Experts are not employees or agents of the Partners and shall not speak on behalf of, or represent, the Partners, individually or collectively, to any third party. OHHLEP Experts may not issue any publications on behalf of the OHHLEP and/or the Partners.

Terms of office and selection

10. In the selection of Experts, consideration shall be given to attaining an adequate distribution of technical expertise, geographical representation and gender balance.

11. Experts of the OHHLEP, including the Chairperson, will be selected and appointed through consultations among the Partners, following a public call for interest.

12. Experts of the OHHLEP shall be appointed to serve for a period of two (2) years and shall be eligible for reappointment. An Expert can only serve as Chairperson for one term.

13. The appointments of Experts, including the Chairperson, may be terminated at any time as agreed by the Partners and in line with the applicable letter of appointment signed jointly by the Partners.

14. The Partners will review ongoing membership of any Expert who is unable to participate in two consecutive meetings and will consult with that Expert, as appropriate.

IV. OPERATION

15. Experts of the OHHLEP do not receive any remuneration for any work related to the OHHLEP. However, when attending in-person meetings, their travel cost and per diem shall be covered by the Partners and processed through the Partner with the lead responsibility for providing secretariat services to the OHHLEP as described under paragraph 21.

16. The OHHLEP shall normally meet three times each year. Additional meetings may be convened. OHHLEP meetings may be held in person or virtually. The working language of the OHHLEP will be English.

17. OHHLEP meetings may be held in open and/or closed session, as decided by the Chairperson in consultation with the Partners.

(a) Open sessions: Open sessions shall be convened for the sole purpose of the exchange of non-confidential information and views, and may be attended by OHHLEP Experts, representatives of the Partners and Observers.

(b) Closed sessions: The sessions dealing with the formulation of recommendations and/or advice to the Partners shall be restricted to the OHHLEP Experts and representatives of the Partners.

18. In order to conduct its business, at least two-thirds of the Experts should be present at a session.

19. The Partners may invite external individuals from time to time to attend the open sessions of the OHHLEP, or parts thereof, as "Observers". Observers may be invited either in their personal capacity, or as representatives from a governmental institution / intergovernmental organization, or from a non-state actor on such conditions that the Partners may agree.

20. The OHHLEP may decide to establish smaller working groups (sub-groups of the OHHLEP) to work on specific issues. Their deliberations shall take place via teleconference or video-conference. The outcome of their deliberations will be submitted to the OHHLEP for review at one of its meetings.

V. MISCELLANEOUS

21. The Partners shall provide necessary scientific and technical support to the OHHLEP. Also, the Partners shall provide secretariat services to the OHHLEP. For administrative purposes, the responsibility

to lead the provision of these secretariat services will rotate between the Partners and the rules, policies and procedures of the Partner with the leading responsibility will apply to any administrative matters for the Experts, pertaining to the operation of the OHHLEP.

22. Information and documentation to which Experts may gain access in performing OHHLEP-related activities shall be considered as confidential and proprietary to the Partners and/or parties collaborating with them and OHHLEP Experts shall only quote from, circulate or use OHHLEP documents in the context of the discharge of their functions with OHHLEP.

23. Any matters relating to the functioning of OHHLEP that are not covered by these Terms of Reference or stated in a formal agreement among the Partners, shall be subject to discussion and agreement among the Partners.