

What is Article 5 about?

In the last Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) meeting, Member States decided that during the Drafting Group Meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body between September 4-6 2023, informal meetings are taking place, *including in relation to Articles 4 (Pandemic prevention and public health surveillance) and 5 (Strengthening pandemic prevention and preparedness through a One Health approach)* in order to facilitate a more in-depth conversations and to build consensus on those as well as other articles of the Bureau's text. It is important that all Member States have information on the relevance of these two articles essential to the achievement of the Pandemic Instrument's objectives especially in relation to strengthening prevention and equity.

In Article 5 Member States are presented with two options,

- Option A recognizes that the majority of emerging infectious diseases and pandemics are caused by zoonotic pathogens. It calls for Member States to promote and implement a One Health approach working closely with all relevant actors in accordance with domestic law and existing instruments and initiatives. Option A calls for enhancing synergies between multisectoral and transdisciplinary collaboration, nationally and internationally, in order to identify and conduct risk assessments of pathogens with pandemic potential at the interface between humans, animals and the environment, recognizing their interdependence. It also calls for pandemic prevention and preparedness plans to address the drivers of emergence and re-emergence of diseases at the human-animal-environment interface such as wildlife trade and land use change. Furthermore, Parties need to assess One Health capacities (including funding to strengthen them) and strengthen synergies with other international instruments that address the drivers of pandemics and increased risks due to human activities. Article 5 highlights the importance of minimizing spillover events. Option A also calls, in accordance with national circumstances, to protect the health of humans, animals and plants, by implementing science-based actions via a One Health approach, taking into account relevant tools and guidelines and collaborating with partners including the Quadripartite. These actions include among others improving infection prevention and stewardship of antimicrobials. In this regard, option A calls for whole-of-society and whole-of government approaches to control zoonotic outbreaks and antimicrobial resistance at source. It also calls for One Health national plans to reduce antimicrobial resistance including antimicrobial stewardship in animals and humans, optimizing antimicrobial consumption and strengthening infection prevention. Moreover, countries need to implement a One Health approach using data collected from and shared across human, animal, and environmental sources for the purpose of preventing and controlling the spillover of pathogens with pandemic potential between humans and animal populations and between different animal species. Option A calls on Member States to facilitate evidence-based infection

prevention and develop training and continuing education programmes for human, animal and environmental health workforces, particularly for the veterinary and environmental services needed to prevent spillover events, in order to build complementary skills, capacities and capabilities to prevent, detect, control and respond to pandemic health threats. Parties need to provide financial and technical support especially to developing countries to enable the implementation of a One Health approach.

- Option B is not to include an article on One Health in the pandemic instrument.

Why is Article 5 important?

Protecting human health will entail preventing the spillover of pathogens from animals to humans. This is because zoonotic disease outbreaks (of animal origin) constitute the overwhelming majority of infectious diseases in humans. Preventing pathogen spillover from animals to humans requires developing multidisciplinary One Health strategies that do not leave the entire burden of action with the ministries of health after a health emergency evolves, but rather involve institutions that address drivers of health risks in animals and the environment.

Implementing a collaborative, multidisciplinary One Health approach, would therefore offer an effective frame to prevention of zoonotic disease outbreaks as well as their mutations and spread among animals and humans. Member States have the historical opportunity to include and enable the implementation of the One Health approach which the scientific community, Quadripartite experts and Member States believe will enable effective prevention of outbreaks and spillover events.

Why should my government support and strengthen Option 5. A?

Around 7 million people died because of the COVID-19 pandemic, 34 million people were pushed into extreme poverty in 2020¹ and 13.8 trillion dollars are the expected economic losses from the pandemic through 2024². Clearly, it is essential to improve our global health law architecture to avoid a repeat of the negative global impacts of a pandemic.

Pandemic prevention requires an integrated, cooperative and holistic approach where protecting public health and achieving health for all are the ultimate outcomes. Achieving these outcomes will require collaboration among stakeholders involved in protecting human, animal and environmental health so that the most effective strategy is developed, and necessary actions are coordinated. These actions include the detection of hotspots and high-risk practices that drive disease outbreaks so that they are prioritized within national strategies supporting communities in transitioning away from these activities and following a precautionary approach.

¹https://covid19.who.int/?adgroupsurvey=%7badgroupsurvey%7d&gclid=EAlaIQobChMI9tzC-ImvgAMVOYZoCR2VhQ1GEAAAYASABEgIdpfD_BwE; https://www.un.org/en/desa/covid-19-slash-global-economic-output-85-trillion-over-next-two-years.

² <https://www.imf.org/en/Blogs/Articles/2022/01/25/blog-a-disrupted-global-recovery>.

Strengthening Option 5. A will be necessary to support member states in successfully implementing their One Health strategies. Elements that could strengthen Option 5. A include:

- Reference to the One Health Joint Plan of Action³ as a framework to follow, based on national circumstances when designing national strategies;
- Support for strengthening or establishing One Health coordination nationally so that One Health plans are designed and implemented with the involvement of the stakeholders responsible for protecting humans, animals and the environment;
- Ensuring that the scope of One Health plans includes identifying activities and hotspots, as well as the interventions and drivers of outbreaks that must be prioritized in national strategies;
- Stronger provisions on how Member States will be supported so that they can design and implement effective One Health strategies. Support would include:
 - o Expert agency support (e.g. approved international, regional or national expert implementing agencies) in facilitating and supporting the implementation of whole-of-government, whole-of-society strategies.
 - o Such strategies and their implementation may require financial and technical support as well as collaboration among countries.

Option B in the current Bureau Text, which proposes a deletion of the article on One Health would undermine clear calls by the scientific community on the importance of following a One Health approach to effectively prevent pandemics, most of which are of animal origin. An instrument tasked with preventing future pandemics will fail vulnerable communities who come into daily contact with pathogens, if the One Health approach is not followed. One Health is an essential component of the prevention, preparedness and response pathway, which is not part of the International Health Regulations (IHR) and it must be included in the Pandemic Instrument. This is the opportunity Member States can take to protect our global health security.

The World Bank's global estimate of prevention costs guided by One Health principles ranges from \$10.3 billion to \$11.5 billion per year, compared to the cost of managing pandemics which, according to the recent estimate by the G20 Joint Finance and Health Taskforce, amounts to about \$30.1 billion per year.⁴ Therefore, implementing these prevention measures is more cost effective than the effects of a pandemic. In other words, Member States who are seriously working to prevent another catastrophic global pandemic from ever happening again must select and strengthen Option 5. A, as it is more comprehensive, scientifically informed and more cost effective than Option B.

FOUR PAWS encourages Member States to choose Option 5. A.

³ Publication: One Health Joint Plan of Action. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240059139>.

⁴ Publication: Putting Pandemics Behind Us: Investing in One Health to Reduce Risks of Emerging Infectious Diseases. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/b8ac824f-1693-5226-b3bf-4d634f5e869e>.