

National Statements segment – Plenary

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> of March, 2024

10-11 EAT

World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH)

Theme: “Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution”.

Dear esteemed delegates and colleagues,

I am grateful for the opportunity to address this assembly and to share insights on behalf of the World Organisation of Animal Health (WOAH) which is the global authority on animal health and welfare.

As we confront the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, it has become increasingly evident that these issues are not isolated and they do not only impact humans, but also animals, both domestic and wild and the environment itself. Therefore, addressing such challenges requires multilateral and transdisciplinary approaches, such as One Health, to arrive at sustainable solutions.

Excellencies, you call for a reinvigorated multilateral and international cooperation. At WOAH this is also our motto. For instance, we have long implemented the One Health approach, which aims to balance the health of humans, animals, and the environment, through collaborations across multiple sectors and disciplines and we have strongly support the integration of UNEP within our today Quadripartite Group gathered with WHO and FAO. Through this partnership, our objectives is to avoid duplication of efforts in leveraging resources as well as a more fruitful sharing of expertise between our four organizations to better support our members.

Climate change threatens animal health directly, as it can limit the availability of water, reduce the quantity and the quality of feed, and exacerbate the risk of disease.

Anthropogenic activities such as land use change, contribute to climate change while illegal trade in wildlife is increasing biodiversity loss. Closer contacts between wild habitats and human settlements apply profound impacts on wildlife health and, inevitably, on human health as 75% of emerging infectious diseases in humans have an animal origin.

Another example is antimicrobials resistance pathogens, which can be released into the environment through agricultural practices and human veterinary medical practices. WOH is actively contributing to integrated risk assessment and management of AMR and providing guidelines and support for the responsible use of antibiotics in veterinary practices.

In conclusion, this underscores the need for holistic, interdisciplinary actions to address these challenges through solidarity so that we can build together a safer and more resilient future for all.

Thank you.