

THE BLUEPRINT FOR PANDEMIC PREVENTION -- AN URGENT CALL TO ACTION FOR POLICYMAKERS --

Prepared by the Coalition for Preventing Pandemics at the Source

Summary: The severity and frequency of pandemics is rising. Global leaders can reduce this risk by taking steps to curb spillover of viruses from wildlife to humans. Urgent action is needed in five key areas: shutting down or strictly regulating wildlife trade and markets, stopping large-scale deforestation and forest degradation, improving human and livestock healthcare in tropical regions, strengthening biosecurity in animal husbandry, and enhancing surveillance for zoonotic viruses. Additional global spending of \$20 billion annually would be sufficient to implement these actions widely, reducing massive human suffering and protecting economies. This amount is only three percent of the most conservative estimate of the annualized global cost of new and emerging diseases of zoonotic origin.

Containing pandemics is difficult and costly

Containing a pandemic is incredibly difficult once it has started. Most people around the world are still not protected from COVID-19 despite hundreds of billions of dollars spent on vaccines, relief and response, and ongoing shutdowns of schools and businesses with tremendous economic and social costs.

It is urgent that policymakers give more attention to preventing future pandemics *before they start*. All viral pandemics over the last one hundred years are zoonotic in origin, initiated by the spillover of viruses primarily from wildlife to humans. Important new research highlights the opportunity and relatively low cost of reducing this spillover risk.

Our [coalition](#) of leading scientists, economists, public health, environmental as well as health and land rights organizations here summarizes new findings and translates them into measures for policymakers to prevent future pandemics before they begin.

Preventing pandemics at the source, before they begin, is highly cost-effective – but largely ignored.

[New peer-reviewed research](#), led by Harvard University's Center for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment, together with ongoing and [additional analysis by our coalition](#) highlights the following:

- The risk of new pandemics of zoonotic origin is rising. There is a good chance that the next pandemic could begin within years, rather

than decades, and could be worse than COVID-19.

- The annualized cost of new diseases of zoonotic origin is conservatively estimated to be about \$600 billion.
- International efforts to address the risks of future pandemics largely focus on important actions to prepare for and rapidly respond to outbreaks to contain their spread, but fundamentally ignore more cost-effective policies and interventions to reduce the risk of spillover at the source.
- ***Urgent policy reforms together with a global annual investment of \$20 billion would be sufficient to implement actions needed to reduce spillover risk on a global scale – just three percent of the annualized cost of new diseases of zoonotic origin.***

Governments should adopt a global blueprint for pandemic prevention

Our recommendations represent the consensus position of members and advisors of the Coalition for Preventing Pandemics at the Source and reflect the findings of Harvard-led [Report of the Scientific Task Force on Pandemic Prevention](#).

The risk of future pandemics can be reduced through the following **five priority actions**:

- ***Shut down or strictly regulate wildlife trade and markets*** that risk contributing to zoonotic spillover, particularly commercial trade in birds and mammals for food, pets, and medicine, much of which is for the luxury market. This should be done while respecting

the rights, culture, and nutritional needs of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

- **Stop deforestation and forest degradation**, especially in tropical and subtropical forests through incentives and penalties for forest protection as sustained by the Government of Brazil that reduced deforestation by 80% between 2004 and 2012. Key related steps needed are restricting the import of agricultural commodities derived from deforestation and protecting Indigenous Peoples' land rights and their self-governance.
- **Provide better healthcare and alternative livelihoods to front-line communities** living close to wildlife in tropical regions.
- **Support improved livestock health, strengthen veterinary care and biosecurity in animal husbandry**, from smallholdings to commercial scale production.
- **Enhance surveillance for zoonotic viruses** at interfaces between humans, domestic animals, and wildlife, particularly in spillover hotspots.

Detailed plans and recommendations already exist to implement these actions, but they lack leadership, support, and resources. Concrete near-term measures policymakers should take to implement this blueprint and prevent future pandemics before they begin are summarized below.

High-income countries should finance a Global Health Security Fund to support low- and middle-income countries to implement the pandemic prevention blueprint

In January, 2021, the United States included a historic call for a global fund to prevent and prepare for pandemics in its [National Security Memorandum - 1](#). In September, 2021, the White House took the bold step of [calling for the establishment of a new global health security fund](#) to help finance efforts to prevent future pandemics. ***The US Congress should finance this Fund at the level required to drive partnership with governments globally on pandemic prevention.*** The Fund should include resources for spillover prevention, including emphasis on supporting implementation of the action areas listed above. ***The G20 governments should together endorse and contribute to the new fund, establish a***

programmatic and operational secretariat and board, and advance full rollout of grants to low- and middle-income countries as soon as possible.

All governments should adopt bold policies for pandemic prevention

Governments should use the upcoming meetings of the G20, the World Health Assembly, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the World Bank, and the UN General Assembly to prioritize political support and funding for the blueprint for pandemic prevention. The recommended actions also contribute strongly to the goals of these international agreements and processes, including the overarching Sustainable Development Goals.

All governments should push for a true One Health approach within the UN system, including new programs of work to bridge the siloed approaches to public health, development, and conservation. The UN Secretary General should make this a priority across the UN and establish a One Health coordination office to advise and support national governments.

Foundations, donors, and businesses must help

Philanthropies have the flexibility to use their influence and to provide rapid funding to test and scale different aspects of the blueprint for pandemic prevention in partnership with governments and NGOs. They can also support efforts to build public understanding and support for the needed policy reforms, while addressing the siloed approach many donors have internally between their health and environmental giving.

Businesses must work to “pandemic-proof” their operations and partner with others in the landscapes and communities where they operate to extend these efforts more widely. For example, companies with supply chains reaching into forest-rich tropical landscapes should support One Health training and spillover surveillance and prevention programs while also remedying their past and present deforestation. Companies involved with livestock must improve biosecurity in their operations and supply chains.

All companies need to ensure there is no deforestation in their supply chains and scrutinize and address any spillover risks linked to capture, rearing, trade or marketing of live animals for pets, food, and medicine.