



**N4H**  
NATURE4HEALTH  
Preventing pandemics together



# CASE FOR SUPPORT

Supported by:



based on a decision of the German Bundestag

# FOREWORD

**The COVID-19 pandemic has caused profound damage to human health, societies and economies across every corner of the world. COVID-19, like Ebola, SARS, the Zika virus and bird flu, is zoonotic, a type of disease that transmits or jumps between animals and humans.**

We already know that 60 per cent of all known infectious diseases in humans are zoonotic, as are 75 per cent of all emerging infectious diseases. Zoonotic diseases are now emerging more frequently as a result of how we source and grow our food, trade and consume animals and disrupt our environment.

The key reason for this is our broken relationship with nature and the anthropogenic pressures we are putting on the planet. By investing in tackling the upstream environmental drivers of zoonotic pandemics, there is a unique opportunity to prevent them from emerging in the first place.

Nature for Health (N4H) is a new initiative which brings together the world's leading environmental and health organisations to reduce the risk of pandemics. Our objectives are ambitious: to work in the low- and middle-income countries which face the highest risk of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, and to lower these risk factors in order to prevent outbreaks or transferral of zoonotic diseases between species. Working with partners in the One Health space, N4H goes beyond responding to disease outbreaks, and focuses on stopping potential pandemics before they spill over from animals to humans.

N4H has received seed funding of 50 million EUR from the German government. However, country interest is already far outstripping these resources with more than 50 regions and countries expressing interest in becoming a country partner during the first phase of work. Governments clearly recognise the importance of upstream prevention and are ready to engage with and implement actions to protect and restore nature to reduce the risk of pandemics.

Our aim is therefore to raise a further 400 million EUR to safeguard the health of humans, animals and ecosystems in an integrated manner, as well as to develop and support implementation structures and partnerships in target countries.

At N4H, we recognise the need for governments and other public bodies to work with organisations that can manage and disburse public funds effectively and efficiently. We also understand the desire of philanthropic donors to make a difference and ensure value for money. Our governance and operating processes are therefore designed to provide fiduciary assurance as well as deliver sustainable impact.

Join us to tackle the environmental drivers of zoonotic diseases and help prevent the next pandemic.

**Our planet. Our health. Our future.**



# OVERVIEW

The case for investing in pandemic prevention is compelling.

## 75%

75% of new human infectious diseases originate with animals and then spill over into humans. Today, this spillover rate is starting to increase dramatically.

## 6.5m

The human suffering and economic cost of pandemics is enormous: COVID-19 has already caused over 6.5 million deaths and cost the global economy USD 13.5 trillion.

## 1%

Yet the price of prevention is estimated to be just a small fraction of this cost (approximately 1%).<sup>1</sup>

# OUR WORK

N4H is a global initiative working nationally to prevent pandemics and related health risks by strengthening the environmental aspects of One Health. This is an intersectoral, interdisciplinary approach that focuses on the nexus between human, animal and environmental health. The initiative aims to promote a widespread understanding of the importance of biodiversity and environmental conservation and position long-term preventative action firmly in human health policies and programmes.

N4H will work on preventative One Health approaches in key jurisdictions by 2030 by tackling their major drivers of environmental degradation. We do this by:

- Enhancing evidence on the links between biodiversity, climate change and health for better decision-making;
- Supporting governments to develop effective policies, structures and frameworks;
- Building capacity, knowledge management and advocacy to implement such policies, structures and frameworks;
- Establishing partnerships and governance to deliver the actions needed.

As well as working in individual countries, N4H raises awareness about the spillover of zoonotic diseases and supports decision makers and relevant actors to implement actions. While there are other initiatives working in the One Health<sup>2</sup> space, their focus, while important, is typically on preventing the spread of pandemics through vaccinations or medical responses rather than stopping pandemics before they spill over. N4H<sup>3</sup> is unique in its focus on preventing zoonotic pandemics emerging from vulnerable ecosystems under pressure from unsustainable human activities, e.g. intensive farming or deforestation.

This will reduce the risk and impact of future zoonotic epidemics and pandemics emanating from environmental degradation, climate change, land use changes, biodiversity loss, animal husbandry and wildlife trade and consumption.

1. World Bank. 2012. People, Pathogens and Our Planet: The Economics of One Health. Washington, DC. World Bank.

2. One Health: an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimise the health of people, animals and ecosystems; Zoonoses: diseases that can spread between animals and people, moving from wild and domesticated animals to humans and from humans to animals. The COVID-19 pandemic is a zoonotic disease.

3. At this time, Consortium Partners include the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization, the World Organisation for Animal Health, International Union for Conservation of Nature, EcoHealth Alliance, and Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), who provided the seed funding for this initiative.

**Our health depends on the health of our planet.**

STEFFI LEMKE, FEDERAL MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, NATURE CONSERVATION, NUCLEAR SAFETY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION, GERMANY



# OUR STRUCTURE

N4H was launched in March 2022 and is a trust fund administered by the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office. With a strong track record, the MPTF Office has established over 180 multi-donor trust funds in 100 countries with a combined capitalisation of USD 15 billion.

Responding to the complexity of upstream prevention and aiming to avoid the common problem of siloed action by individual doctors, policymakers or academics, N4H is governed and implemented by a group of Consortium Partners. This group is made up of the world's leading public authorities in the fields of environment and health and includes United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organisations, and civil society groups. The founding Consortium Partners are inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary, assembled based on their unique institutional knowledge, practical experience and expertise in biodiversity, animal and human health.

The role of the Consortium Partners is to create synergies across their own organizations and other One Health initiatives, mobilize resources, share expertise and implement results. The Consortium brings improved results and effectiveness, improved ways of working and efficiency and equity. This multi-partner collaboration facilitates the adoption of a systems approach to pandemic prevention and draws on the complementary skills and capabilities of all partners.

The Steering Committee, made up of senior representatives of the Consortium Partners, is responsible for governance and decision-making. The Steering Committee benefits from support from a global Technical Advisory Group, bringing independence, expertise and diversity to N4H. The Secretariat drives the operational work and is based at UNEP in Nairobi, Kenya.

**Our environment underpins all life on Earth and we can only ensure that vision of a healthy future by engaging all sectors of society.**

WILLIAM B. KARESH, D.V.M, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR HEALTH AND POLICY, ECOHEALTH ALLIANCE



# OUR IMPACT



With initial funding, N4H plans to work in around 15-18 countries or regions over an 8-year period. In the longer term, enabled by additional funding, N4H aims to support more than 50 low- and middle-income countries in regions experiencing significant land-use changes, environmental degradation and where biodiversity is threatened.

The impact of measures for preventing pandemics will include:

- Human lives saved
- Economic costs avoided
- Natural resources conserved
- Biodiversity enhanced and ecosystems restored
- Alternative livelihoods for subsistence farmers developed
- Animal welfare increased

There would also be potential synergies with other national commitments and substantial co-benefits when approached via the lens of biodiversity conservation and advancing national, regional, and subnational implementation of a One Health approach.

The impact of preventing future zoonotic pandemics can be estimated by looking at the cost of past pandemics:

- The 2013-2015 Ebola outbreak in West Africa took over 11,000 lives and caused USD 2.8 billion in economic losses according to the World Bank,<sup>4</sup> with some estimates as high as USD 53 billion.<sup>5</sup>
- COVID-19 has already caused over 6.5 million deaths with economic losses likely exceeding USD 12.5 trillion through 2024.<sup>6</sup>
- Highly pathogenic avian influenza viruses inflict human and animal deaths and loss of livelihoods and threaten wild bird populations.<sup>7</sup>

4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016. Cost of the Ebola Epidemic. Cost of the Ebola Epidemic | History | Ebola (Ebola Virus Disease) | CDC. World Bank, 2016. 2014-2015 West Africa Ebola Crisis: Impact Update. 2014-2015 West Africa Ebola Crisis: Impact Update (worldbank.org).

5. Huber, Caroline, Lynn Finelli and Warren Stevens, 2018. The Economic and Social Burden of the 2014 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa. *The Journal of Infectious Diseases*, Volume 218, Issue Supplement\_5, 15 December 2018, Pages S698–S704.

6. IMF sees cost of COVID pandemic rising beyond \$12.5 trillion estimate | Reuters

7. World Bank. 2018. Operational framework for strengthening human, animal and environmental public health systems at their interface (English). Washington, D.C. World Bank Group.

8. World Bank. 2022. Putting Pandemics Behind Us: Investing in One Health to Reduce Risks of Emerging Infectious Diseases. Washington, DC. World Bank.

**Prevention costs are less than 1 per cent of the cost of responding to COVID-19 pandemic in one single year.<sup>8</sup>**



# CASE FOR SUPPORT

N4H is now seeking one or two additional anchor funders by early 2023 to increase our 50 million EUR seed funding. The role of an anchor donor is critical to scale up this work. Such donors will be pioneers in deep prevention, strengthening the growing international recognition of its vital importance and investing in bringing benefits to people and the planet.

In the longer term, N4H is looking to mobilise a total of 450 million EUR to increase our reach across all low- and middle-income countries for which there is an elevated risk of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases.

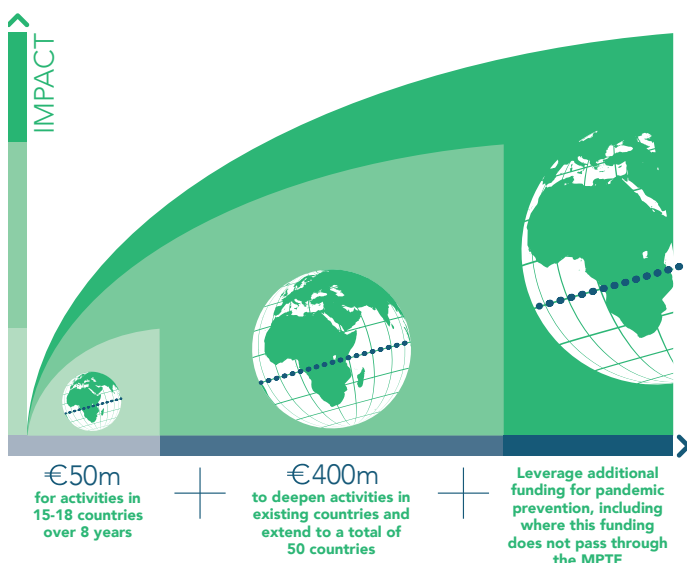
While potential zoonosis spillover hotspots can be found on all continents, they are concentrated in the tropical belt spanning some 50 nations.<sup>9</sup> Given the rapid transmissibility of new pathogens, neglecting even one high-risk country could jeopardise the programme’s efficacy. N4H therefore aims to expand its remit to encompass all tropical belt countries.

We estimate that approximately 2 million EUR will allow us to begin groundwork, but 10 million EUR is a more realistic figure to cover the cost of supporting an individual country in enabling and sustaining preventative One Health approaches. The figure of 450 million EUR is therefore drawn from a proposed expansion to around 50 countries, and a strengthening of our actions in existing countries, to maximise the global benefits of the N4H programme.

Functioning as a Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), or pooled resource mechanism, all N4H contributions will be collected in the trust fund and allocated through a process of collective expert determination.

All donors who make a contribution of more than 10 million EUR before March 31st, 2023, will be given the opportunity of representation in the decision-making body, the Steering Committee. Donors who make a contribution after March 31st, 2023, will be offered a place on the Steering Committee on a case-by-case basis.

N4H seeks to leverage additional investment alongside its own investments, including where this additional funding does not pass through the MPTF. N4H is also open to accommodating funds in related environmental and health issues where there are mutually beneficial objectives and a commitment to planetary health.



9. Allen et al. (2017), Global hotspots and correlates of emerging zoonotic diseases, Nature Communications volume 8, Article number: 1124

# OUR VALUES

Five values lie at the core of how N4H operates:

1

**ACCOUNTABILITY:**

we will set expectations, monitor and report on performance, and adjust management decisions in light of results.

2

**SOCIAL EQUITY:**

we will mainstream social inclusion, gender and equity in all aspects of our work, knowing that without social equity we cannot succeed.

3

**TRANSPARENCY:**

we will give confidence to all our stakeholders that N4H is operating effectively and efficiently.

4

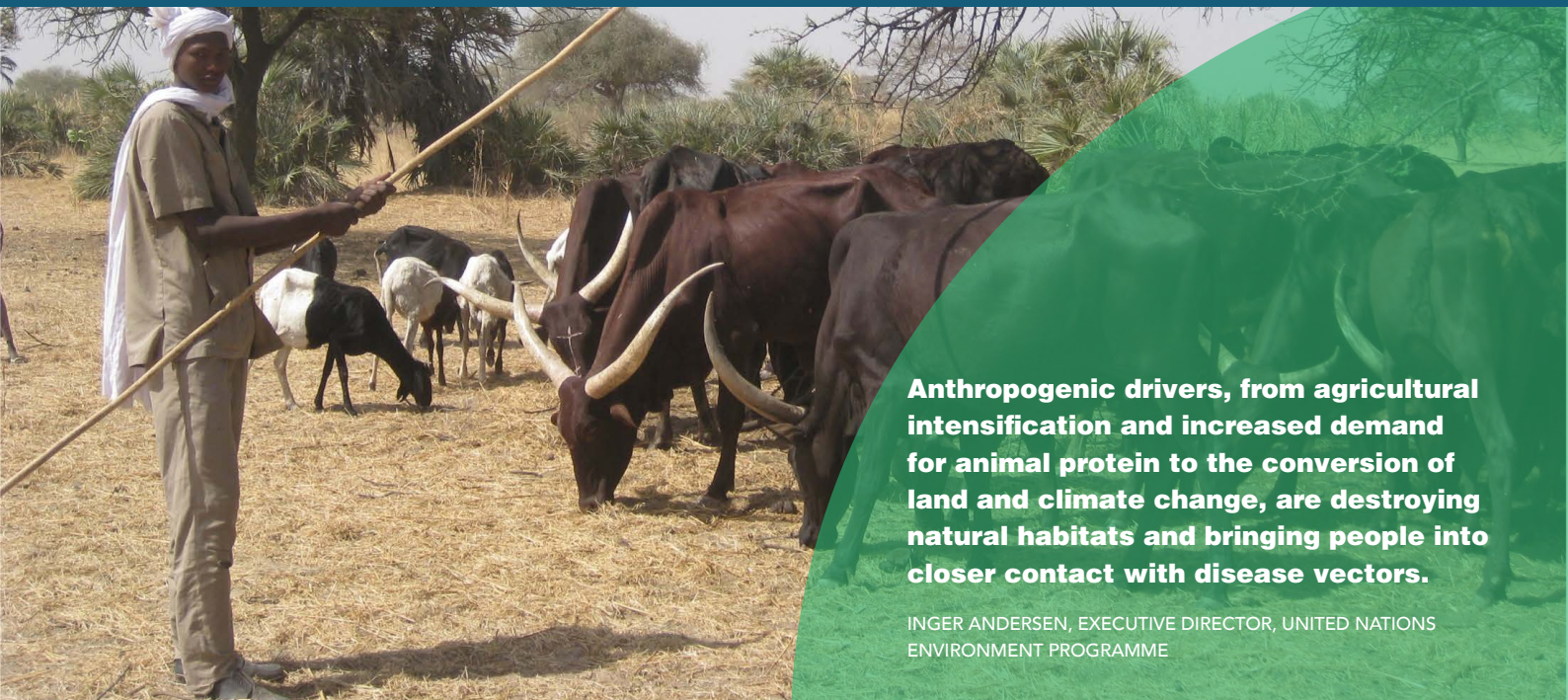
**TRANSFORMATION:**

we will take a systems approach to change, ensuring participation and adaptation.

5

**VALUE ADDITION:**

we will actively seek to add value both indirectly via the Consortium Partners and directly to recipients of its support.



**Anthropogenic drivers, from agricultural intensification and increased demand for animal protein to the conversion of land and climate change, are destroying natural habitats and bringing people into closer contact with disease vectors.**

INGER ANDERSEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

## RISKS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Implementing N4H carries with it several risks, for example the health of workers or challenges with land acquisition. There may also be risks associated with involuntary settlement and engaging with indigenous people and marginalised groups. It will also be necessary to ensure the health, safety and rights of populations in project sites and countries.

Over time, N4H's risk management strategies can provide a model for other development activities and promote improved identification of trade-offs and co-benefits.



# SUPPORT US

To make a financial or in-kind contribution to N4H or to discuss ways to participate, please contact Julian Blanc at the UN Environment Programme.

[www.nature4health.net](http://www.nature4health.net)   [info@nature4health.net](mailto:info@nature4health.net)



Scan here to find out more about N4H

**By acting together, we can stop pandemics  
before they spill over.**