

Alliance secretariat Operations 101

The International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade (in short, “Alliance”) is an unincorporated membership organisation. It realises the mission laid down in its charter through collaborative actions and cooperations of its members. The coordination and facilitation of the operation of the Alliance is the responsibility of the Secretariat.

Uniqueness of the Alliance

As the Alliance is the only international, interdisciplinary, and inclusive platform on primary pandemic prevention focussing on wildlife trade as a driver of zoonotic spillover with a multidisciplinary global membership, the Secretariat has proven its **calling power** and **outreach** through the following success factors:

- Over **400 members, including individual members** which together represent a good balance of cross-sector and cross-disciplinary participation;
- Strong representation of Alliance members at relevant sector conferences and congresses supported by **technical coordination through the Secretariat**;
- The Alliance offers custom-made **government consultation** for its services and multidisciplinary **membership expertise** bridging science and policy to **strengthen government capacities** for risk reduction at the human-wildlife-interface;

Secretariat role according to the Operational Manual

The Secretariat is the Alliance’s executive organ. Its purpose and function are defined in the Alliance’s Operational Manual as follows:

1. To act as the overall coordinating and managing entity of the Alliance.
2. To host and convene Plenary meetings, Steering Committee meetings as well as meetings of the Alliance’s Working Groups, virtually or physically.
3. To assist the Steering Committee in their work by organizing and documenting meetings, updating on key issues, and facilitating decisions.
4. To facilitate Steering Committee elections.
5. To enable collaboration and communication among members through appropriate infrastructure and formats.
6. To maintain knowledge instruments, such as a continuously improving website infrastructure, to serve as a knowledge hub, facilitate exchange and matchmaking of interdisciplinary expertise and assist members in knowledge generation and sharing.
7. To represent the Alliance in relevant international fora, communicate the Alliance’s work to the public, engage with stakeholders, promote a One Health approach (which

integrates human, animal, and ecosystem health interests equally/ 'biodiversity-inclusive') jointly with members and identify suitable strategic and innovative partnerships to that end.

8. To provide an annual report to the membership.
9. To strive to secure sustainable funding for the Alliance, together with the Steering Committee.

Secretariat operation - Practical experience

In practice, this has meant that the operational responsibilities of the Secretariat have fallen into the following four broad groups. To implement these activities, the Secretariat is currently staffed with three Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) staff.

Process-related tasks

1. Organization of internal Meetings and Member Processes (on average 50% FTE):

- Convene, organize, and document meetings of the Steering Committee, three times per year. In practice, on average one meeting per year has taken place physically, back-to-back with large international events where the Alliance and/or Steering Committee members' own organisations have had a significant presence.
- Host and support Plenary meetings, once per year, on average online, presenting the results of the Alliance's work (including mainstreaming the results from working groups into the Alliance) and ensure involvement of members into ongoing strategic processes.
- Host and convene thematic Working Groups. So far, five such groups have been initiated: WG1 Science-Policy Interface, WG2 The Big Picture and WG3 Evaluation, WG4 Human Dimensions and WG5 Data Management. Topics were identified through a joint process with the members, while the working groups themselves have been led by Alliance members (mostly from the Steering Committee) and supported and in parts co-facilitated by the Secretariat.

2. Partnership and Representation (on average 90% FTE):

- Active participation in the design and sponsoring of relevant workshops, strategic events as well as representation of the Alliance at international events, and/or support members representing the Alliance. In the past, this has included e.g. the launch of the Quadripartite One Health Joint Plan of Action, CBD COP15 workshop and science-policy panel, World Health Summit, conferences of the Wildlife Diseases Association, World One Health Congress, Planetary Health Meetings, , the biennial EcoHealth Conference,

or “Breaking Barriers Conference Berlin” jointly organized with Quadripartite, BMZ, BMUV and WCS.

- Build on this presence and growing international profile by maintaining strategic partnerships where the Alliance contributes to policy processes related to the Alliance’s mission. In the past, this has included the Alliance (through the Secretariat) an open letter to include wildlife health in the WHO Pandemic Instrument, drafts of the Global Action Plan for Biodiversity and Health, as well as being invited to observe the WHO Guideline Development group on Reducing public health risks in traditional food markets.

3. Communication and Knowledge Management¹ (on average 100% FTE):

- Establish and maintain the Alliance’s website infrastructure (<https://alliance-health-wildlife.org>), with an up-to-date database of members to provide networking opportunities, as well as a project map of relevant projects by Alliance members.
- Maintain regular Alliance-branded event formats that communicate the work of the Alliance and its members to broader audiences. As of now, these formats include “Expert talk” that center on discussions of specific thematic issues with one invited speaker, and “Voices on the ground” that provide a platform for practical experiences (‘realities on the ground’) of members and communities. In addition, the Secretariat hosts events, e.g. showcasing new relevant guidelines, and interactive workshops that member organisations want to make accessible to the broader audience.
- Maintain an Alliance communications and media package of standard presentations and video reels that members can use for representing the Alliance.

4. Administrative Duties and Network Maintenance (on average 60% FTE):

- Maintain a record of members, manage membership applications and the related information flow and information packages.
- Maintain the composition of the Steering Committee by organising timely re-elections to Steering Committee seats. Because of the strategic importance of the Steering Committee for the Alliance and the strong thematic profile of Steering Committee seats, this has required active and, in some cases, intensive networking with members to solicit candidates.
- Initiate strategic processes, such as the review of the Alliance’s strategy. Organise and facilitate the relevant participatory processes and conduct necessary analyses, together with Steering Committee members. Involve external resources to assist these processes where necessary.

¹ See communications guidelines in the annex.

- Maintain and implement the secretariat's own work plans, supported by operational planning, to implement decisions made by the Plenary and Steering Committee.
- Secure and manage funding and resources for the Secretariat's operations.

Additional relevant context: The Alliance Secretariat was hosted at GIZ by a so called Global Project (GP). Apart from setting up and hosting the Secretariat, the GP funded two rounds of calls for proposals (18 projects in total), the government consultation facility (CONTACT) and some other minor activities. In its remaining project period, the GP will finalise its activities and will hand over the Secretariat function. Any responsibilities for the financed projects will not be handed over, as they will all be finished by the time of the transition.

Over a four-year period, in average 6 staff members (5 FTE) and an intern were working in the GP. Part of the time was allocated to GIZ-internal processes or are already finalised, such as website development, setting up the governance structure, vision film creation, building a membership base, defining vision, mission, scope, focus and goals of the Alliance, including a glossary, branding, identity and coordination of activities which will not be handed over (see below).

Activities conducted by the GIZ Global Project (GP) and Secretariat:

These are activities which can be build-upon in the future but are not an essential part of the Secretariat's core function.

Government consultation facility CONTACT

- The GP facilitated the matchmaking between government needs and technical expertise coming from the Alliance membership.
- This includes, but is not limited to, (a) organizing and participating in the government meetings to determine areas of interest in primary pandemic prevention and legislative / regulatory / capacity needs, which leads to the official call to action through a letter of interest² issued by the political party, (b) coordinating the contractual processes with the mission implementing entity, (c) facilitating the recruitment process to hire Alliance member expertise for the mission³.
- The GP further communicates implementation updates and CONTACT mission results to the Alliance membership (see communication guidelines in annex for more details).

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→ *What happened so far?*

Launch of CONTACT and **first four missions in Benin, Peru, Bolivia, and Guatemala** based on the needs of the governmental partners in each country.

Themes covered by the missions: Pathogen identification, risk assessment analysis and the integration of social sciences through analyses on the communities underlying beliefs related to wildlife (Benin), government stakeholder consultations to understand the risks of disease emergence along the wildlife trade chain and the gaps in technical capacity and resources to respond to these risks (Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala).

--> receiving organisations can build on and continue this work if additional funding for the missions can be secured.

Funded projects

- The GP coordinated 2 calls for proposals and selected projects based on a technical, inclusivity, and balance evaluation grid.
- Two symposia were organised to facilitate the exchange of grant recipients to identify synergies and potential cross-sectoral / international cooperation.

→ *What happened so far?*

18 projects in 23 countries, in the fields of pathogen identification, social and behavioral change and law and regulation. Scientific publications have been generated from project results and knowledge has been shared with the community and stakeholders, such as local communities or political entities and governmental bodies.

² An exemplary letter of interest can be shared upon request.

³ Exemplary terms of reference can be shared upon request.

--> receiving organisations can build on and continue this work if additional funding for calls for proposals can be secured.

International processes

- The Secretariat facilitated and coordinated commenting by the membership of political processes, e.g. global action plans and drafts of core documents.
- Provided technical expertise to international policy processes advocating for the inclusion of wildlife health and trade and primary pandemic prevention.
- Technical expert members of the Secretariat represent the Alliance at international sector (biodiversity, One Health, wildlife health) conferences and conventions.

→ *What happened so far?*

The **numerous political processes and platforms** in which the Alliance was and is actively involved include: a side event at the CBD CoP 15; the launch of the Quadripartite Joint Plan of Action in 2022; The Alliance was presented through its members at the CITES Animals Committee and submitted an information document to the CITES Standing Committee; high-level panel discussions at the World Health Summit 2022 in Berlin, and during the Wildlife Disease Association Conferences (Latin America chapter 2023 in Guatemala and Europe chapter 2024 in Germany), and many others⁴.

What is expected from both contracting sides?

a) Obligations of the future Secretariat

The future Secretariat is expected to fulfil the above-mentioned process-related tasks, adhering to the **Alliance Charter**⁵ including its **Mission and Vision** in constant communication and exchange with the Steering Committee – implementing the membership will, represented by the Steering Committee (within the limits and constraints of the receiving organisation). The function and role of the Steering Committee will persist as described in the Operational Manual⁶. The Steering Committee members shall provide guidance to the future Secretariat on all relevant matters including related to strategy and fundraising. Whereas the continuation of the implementation-related activities as conducted by the GIZ global programme and current Secretariat, i.e. CONTACT, projects, and international processes, are optional and largely depend on fundraising success and strategy of the receiving organization.

By signing of the grant agreement, the future Secretariat is furthermore legally obliged to adhere to the **schedule of financial and technical reports** as well as the **disbursement schedule**. Further information for grant recipients can be found here: [Financing: Contract management and contract processing - giz.de](#)

⁴ A comprehensive overview of all processes and platforms will be provided in an upcoming Impact Report.

⁵ See here: [Charter - International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade \(alliance-health-wildlife.org\)](#).

⁶ See here: [Operational Manual - International Alliance against Health Risks in Wildlife Trade \(alliance-health-wildlife.org\)](#).

Special focus: Management of the **Alliance website**

Concerning the **intellectual property rights** of the published products and knowledge material uploaded on the Alliance website, the future Secretariat will be required to sign a separate contract with GIZ. This includes the **access and management of personal data** such as the mailing list of the members, that falls under the General Data Protection Regulation of the European Union. For more information please see: [What is GDPR, the EU's new data protection law? - GDPR.eu](https://gdpr.eu/what-is-gdpr-the-eus-new-data-protection-law/)

b) Obligations by the GIZ

The GIZ global programme commits to provide technical support for the future Secretariat. The support will be provided by **3 full time equivalents**, to be staffed and contracted by GIZ, until **August 15th, 2026** (see handover timeline below). The GIZ team will guide the future Secretariat with all above-mentioned process-related tasks to ensure a smooth transition especially in terms of working group continuity, community management and stakeholder communication. This **may include** both **online and face-to-face capacity building sessions and workshops**, funded by the GIZ programme.

Handover documentation will include:

- **Communication guidelines** outlining the lessons learned and best practices of exchange formats, knowledge products, website handling, admin access and all rights, corporate design and community engagement;
- The **membership base** and a **stakeholder map** providing an overview of the Alliance strategic partners, potential donors and allies;

Timeline and actions during the hand-over of the Secretariat

