

## Calling for a COVID-19 One Health Research Coalition

Emerging from its ancestral bat host in December, 2019,<sup>1</sup> possibly at a wildlife trading market in Wuhan, China,<sup>2</sup> severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) had by mid-April, 2020, spread globally, infecting more than 2 million individuals and causing at least 130 000 deaths. Travel restrictions were imposed, borders sealed, schools and businesses closed, and more than half of humanity locked down, all to reduce the spread of this virus.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is not just a global pandemic caused by the zoonotic SARS-CoV-2 but represents a critical pivot point in modern times, joining only a few episodes in recorded history. The unique features of this world-changing event are its suspected origin at the human–environment–animal interface and its rapid explosion as a result of unprecedented levels of human interconnectivity, mobility, and global trade.<sup>3</sup> COVID-19 epitomises why One Health, which recognises the fundamental interconnectedness of humans, animals, and their shared environment, is key to ensuring the healthy and sustainable future of the planet.

There is important global consensus on many issues around health and the sustainability of our socioeconomy and ecosystems. For example, global health challenges, such as emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and non-communicable diseases, are further fuelled by global trends related to climate change, growing populations, consumerism, poverty, conflict, and migration.<sup>4</sup> However, a great deal still remains unclear or unknown. The world cannot afford to proceed without some foresight because missteps can lead to disaster. Neither can the world afford to be rigid in the charted path. Flexibility will be required as knowledge advances.

Research anchored in the recognition that the health of our planet hinges on symbiotic relationships between humans, animals, and the environment that we share and in the understanding that we are interconnected by default must gather evidence for a framework within which to interpret and apply this evidence towards preventing further global catastrophes.

The Chairs of the *Lancet* One Health Commission, together with colleagues, call for the establishment of an inclusive and transparent COVID-19 One Health Research Coalition to strengthen linkages with the evolving climate change and planetary health research community. This multidisciplinary and multilateral coalition would galvanise the research community and research funders towards designing, undertaking, coordinating, and synthesising research at the human–environment–animal interface for the creation of a healthy and sustainable reconnected future for our planet.

ASW and JHA are co-Chairs of the *Lancet* One Health Commission. All other authors declare no competing interests.

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- 1 Zhou P, Yang X-L, Wang X-G, et al. A pneumonia outbreak associated with a new coronavirus of probable bat origin. *Nature* 2020; **579**: 270–73.

- 2 Zhang Y-Z, Holmes EC. A genomic perspective on the origin and emergence of SARS-CoV-2. *Cell* 2020; **181**: 223–27.
- 3 Tatem AJ, Hay SI, Rogers DJ. Global traffic and disease vector dispersal. *Proc Natl Acad Sci* 2006; **103**: 6242–47.
- 4 Butler CD. Infectious disease emergence and global change: thinking systemically in a shrinking world. *Infect Dis Poverty* 2012; **1**: 5.



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The COVID-19 One Health Research Coalition is in the interim being hosted by the Oslo-based Secretariat of the *Lancet* One Health Commission. Inquiries regarding the coalition may be sent to [secretariat@covid19onehealth.org](mailto:secretariat@covid19onehealth.org)

For WHO's COVID-19 Data Explorer see <https://covid19.who.int/explorer>

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