



*Annapaola Rizzoli, Climate and Health Action Award to the One Health Commission Speech at the Award Ceremony. SEEJPH 2023. Posted: Vol. XX.*

## **SHORT REPORT**

### **Climate and Health Action Award to the One Health Commission, Speech at the Award Ceremony**

**Annapaola Rizzoli**

Research and Innovation Centre, Edmund Mach Foundation, Italy

**Corresponding author:**

Annapaola Rizzoli DVM, PhD

Address: Research and Innovation Centre, Edmund Mach Foundation

Via E. Mach, 1 38010 S. Michele all'Adige (TN) – Italy

Email: [annapaola.rizzoli@fmach.it](mailto:annapaola.rizzoli@fmach.it)



Dear Awards Committee and Governing Council of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA), and WFPHA Delegates,

On behalf of the One Health Commission Executive Director Dr. Cheryl Stroud, who unfortunately could not be here today, we are incredibly honored to receive the Climate and Health Action Award assigned to the One Health Commission (OHC). We thank Dr. Ulrich Laaser for nominating the OHC for this award.

Dr. Laaser is a scientist who has embraced the One Health concept and worked hard alongside the OHC on a number of initiatives highlighting our urgent global need to implement One Health thinking, acting, and living at all levels of academia, government, policy, and research. As highlighted in one of his recent papers, the definition of "One Health" has been recently reviewed by four global institutions joined together as the One Health Quadripartite (FAO, WHO, WOA, and UNEP):

"One Health is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals, and ecosystems. It recognizes the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants, and the wider environment (including

ecosystems) are closely linked and interdependent. The approach mobilizes multiple sectors, disciplines, and communities at varying levels of society to work together to foster well-being and tackle threats to health and ecosystems while addressing the collective need for clean water, energy, and air, safe and nutritious food, taking action on climate change, and contributing to sustainable development".

Climate change, in particular, is one of the significant global challenges that provides an opportunity to share ideas and knowledge across disciplines to promote sustainable development under the One Health framework.

A One Health approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation may, in fact, significantly contribute to animal, human and ecosystem health by improving healthy eating habits such as those included in the Mediterranean diet, with consequences on the entire global food production system, especially on the animal food production chain that is thought to contribute to climate change, as well as to animal welfare.

Implementation of One Health community-based surveillance of zoonoses (diseases that pass between animals and humans) such as vector-borne diseases (VBDs), provides



another practical example of how to mitigate the health effects of climate change. VBDs reveal the ‘interconnections’ of the interconnections as climate change expands vector ranges, exposing animals and humans alike to greater disease risks.

A dynamic One Health leadership and management framework requires both bottom-up and top-down structural elements, interacting based on scientific reasoning and guiding long-term One Health advancement. Innovative ideas and subsequent initiatives are often initiated bottom-up, as is the societal dimension of One Health and its social dynamism[1]. Yet, to be sustainable, One Health interventions also require support ‘top down’ from policy makers and governments.

The One Health Commission is one of the best examples of a bottom-up initiative to implement this paradigm shift that will bridge the many disciplines which characterize our current systems. Incorporated in 2009 in Washington, DC, as a non-profit organization, the One Health Commission was formed as an outcome of a One Health Initiative Task Force led by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the American Medical Association (AMA), as well as other partner

organizations. The OHC is a globally focused organization working to further implementation of One Health and One Health actions worldwide. It highlights and connects 498 entities working for One Health around the world, including academic, governmental, regional, private, and non-profit organizations.

The OHC seeks to raise awareness and to educate all audiences about the importance of transcending institutional and disciplinary boundaries to transform how animal, human, plant, and ecosystem health professionals work together for the health of all living creatures and the planet. Its mission is to:

- 'Connect' One Health Advocates and Stakeholders, to 'Create' networks and teams that work together across disciplines to 'Educate' about One Health and One Health issues.
- Connect those working for One Health around the world to facilitate needed synergistic relationships and collaborations at all levels of academia, government, policy, and research;
- Create opportunities for human, animal, plant, and ecosystem health-related disciplines and institutions to work together in transformative collaborations;

- Educate the public about the importance and urgent need for the One Health approach. This includes established professionals and students from all disciplines (from Anthropology to Architectural Design to Biology/Chemistry to Food Scientists to Medicine to Psychology to Sociology to Zoology, etc.), agricultural and food production sectors, health care providers from human and animal domains, policy and lawmakers, 'everyone'.

- Prepare the next generation of One Health leaders and professionals by supporting Students for One Health and facilitating their efforts to further the One Health paradigm shift.

Among its initiatives, in 2016 the OHC helped launch and leads today the annual global One Health Day, a timely initiative that gives scientists and One Health advocates a powerful platform and voice for moving beyond current provincial approaches to emerging infectious diseases, antimicrobial resistance, climate change, environmental pollution, and many other issues.

The OHC also oversees since 2015 the monthly One Health Happenings Newsletter

that provides an overview of articles and other news from the global One Health movement and about One Health topics gathered from media worldwide. For more information, please visit the OHC website[2]. We also wish to thank all the organizational sponsors of the One Health Commission. Their contributions are fundamental to supporting the activities led by the OHC.

To conclude, via this award, the One Health Commission is honored to share the One Health concept with the WFPHA and the broader international public health community. This award motivates the OHC to continue and to expand its efforts to make One Health thinking and acting the default way of living at all levels of academia, industry, research, government and policy.

Thanks again for this highly appreciated award.

## References

1. Laaser, U., et al., *Exchange and Coordination: Challenges of the Global One Health Movement*. South Eastern European Journal of Public Health (SEEJPH), 2022.
2. The One Health Commission at: [www.onehealthcommission.org](http://www.onehealthcommission.org)