



September 14, 2021

Dear President Biden:

United States leadership is crucial to ending the current COVID-19 pandemic and preventing future pandemics from occurring. We are encouraged by the recent release of the new, *American Pandemic Preparedness: Transforming Our Capabilities*, but we would like to highlight serious omissions in the plan.

We do not know where or when the next pandemic will start. We do know it is likely to emerge within a decade and to be the result of zoonotic spillover of a virus from wildlife to humans, perhaps with another animal (wild or domesticated) as an intermediate host.

Your plan rightly highlights the importance of such spillover as the origin of almost all emerging infectious diseases. As organizations with deep expertise on wildlife-human health linkages we also know that much can, fortunately, be done to reduce spillover risk at the source. This requires addressing problems with wildlife trade and markets, preventing deforestation and forest degradation, and improving livestock biosecurity and management practices.

We are therefore deeply concerned that actions to prevent spillover at the source appear to be entirely missing from your plan, as currently proposed. Such actions must be part of any comprehensive plan to prevent future pandemics if it is going to be effective in achieving that goal. We cannot stress enough how much more cost effective and efficient it is to prevent spillover in the first place, than to try to control an outbreak, epidemic, or pandemic.

Failing to address the drivers of emerging infectious diseases and pandemics would be a grave mistake and ignores emerging scientific consensus, including a [significant new report](#) from a global science taskforce convened by Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health. A "containment-only" strategy also will be seen as acceptance of sickness and death among the poorest who will always suffer more with this approach.



Our [Coalition to Prevent Pandemics at the Source](#) brings together many of the leading public health, wildlife and conservation practitioners and experts and we have developed a [suite of recommendations](#) that we have shared with your team and that we urge you to review and address. We stand ready assist in any way that we can and we can provide more detailed recommendations.

An ounce of prevention is truly worth a pound of cure.

Respectfully yours,

Members of the Coalition to Prevent Pandemics at the Source:

Conservation International, Dalberg Catalyst, Health In Harmony, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Marked by COVID, Management Sciences for Health, Rainforest Alliance, Right to Health Action, The Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Resources Institute, World Wildlife Fund

CC:

Lloyd Austin III, Secretary of Defense

Antony Blinken, Secretary of State

Ron Klain, White House Chief of State

Eric Lander, Science Advisor to the President

Samantha Power, Administration, US Agency for International Development

Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor