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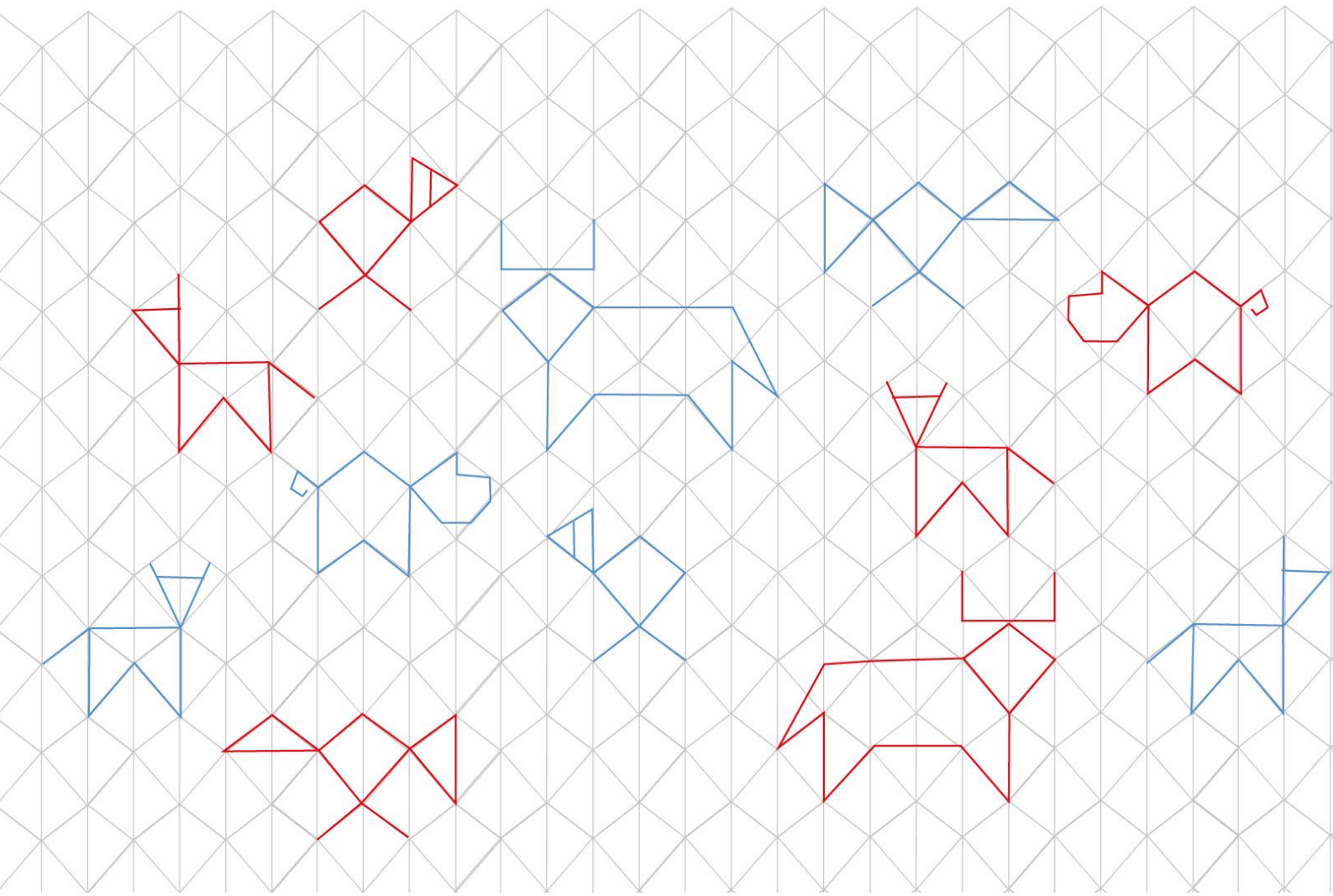


World Organisation
for Animal Health
Founded as OIE

20th Meeting of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for the Americas

Report

April 17, 2026



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Abbreviations

ALA: Latin American Poultry Association

ASF: African Swine Fever

CAHFSA: Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency

CaribVet: Caribbean Animal Health Network

CDC: Center for Disease Control and Prevention

CENSA: National Center for Animal Health

CSF: Classical Swine Fever

COPEG: Panama–U.S. Commission for the Eradication and Prevention of the New World Screwworm

CVP: Permanent Veterinary Committee of the Southern Cone

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FMD: Foot-and-Mouth Disease

GF-TADs: Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases

IAAP: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

IICA: Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture

NWS: New World Screwworm

OIEA: International Atomic Energy Agency

OIPORC: Ibero-American Organization of Pig Producers

OIRSA: International Regional Organization for Agricultural Health

OMSA: World Organisation for Animal Health

PAHO: Pan American Health Organization

PAHO-PANAFTOSA: Pan American Center for Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Veterinary Public Health

RSC: Regional Steering Committee

SG-CAN: General Secretariat of the Andean Community

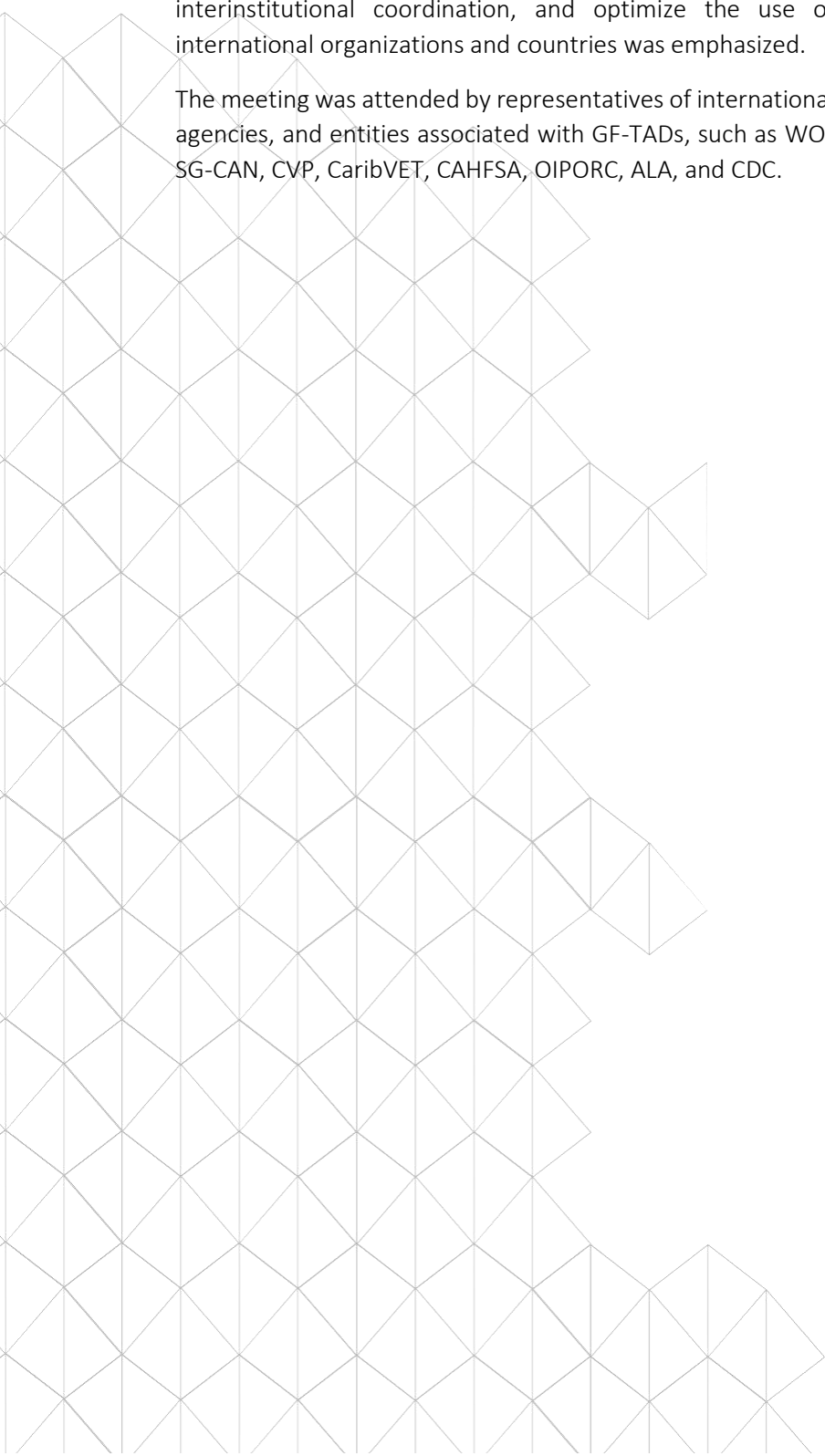
SGE: Standing Group of Experts

Executive Summary

The meeting of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee was held on April 17 in a virtual format and its main objective was to review the activities carried out within the GF-TADs framework during 2025, analyze the situation of priority transboundary animal diseases in the region, and discuss the update of global initiatives and regional strategies for the 2026–2030 period.

The role of GF-TADs as a consolidated regional coordination mechanism was highlighted, even in context of limited resources. Likewise, the need to strengthen strategic planning, improve interinstitutional coordination, and optimize the use of resources through synergies among international organizations and countries was emphasized.

The meeting was attended by representatives of international, regional, and subregional organizations, agencies, and entities associated with GF-TADs, such as WOAHP, FAO, IICA, OIRSA, PAHO-PANAFTOSA, SG-CAN, CVP, CaribVET, CAHFSA, OIPORC, ALA, and CDC.



Key Discussion Points

Review of activities and regional situation

Dr. Estrada, Chair of the RSC, presented an overview of the technical meetings held in 2025, highlighting that it was a very active year, with virtual sessions of the Standing Groups of Experts (SGEs) on Avian Influenza and New World Screwworm, as well as an in-person meeting of the SGE on Transboundary Swine Diseases. The meetings focused on the following topics:

- RSC meeting (March 2025): review of the epidemiological situation, approval of terms of reference, and definition of technical and strategic priorities.
- SGE on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI): analysis of global and regional trends, surveillance in cattle, and update of control measures.
- SGE on New World Screwworm (NWS): operational establishment of the group, review of the regional situation, and identification of strategic actions.
- SGE on Transboundary Swine Diseases (ASF/CSF): epidemiological situation, active and syndromic surveillance, biosecurity, movement control, and emergency preparedness.
- Meeting on international organizations related to priority diseases: review of structural gaps, progress, and regional needs.

Report on analysis of actions related to priority transboundary diseases

The analysis presented by the GF-TADs Secretariat showed that regional activities carried out during 2024–2025 and those planned for 2026–2027 were assessed against the objectives of global initiatives and the pillars of the regional strategy:

1. Risk management (largest proportion of actions).
2. Epidemiological surveillance.
3. Sanitary governance.
4. Biosecurity and risk communication.
5. Areas with lower levels of intervention included:
6. Risk assessment.
7. Emergency preparedness.

Regarding diseases, ASF received the most attention, followed by HPAI, NWS, and CSF.

Structural gaps and identified challenges

During the discussion, participants agreed that critical gaps persist:

- Insufficient control of animal movements, both formal and informal.
- Uneven laboratory capacities, including lack of regional reference laboratories for certain diseases.
- Limited digitalization of surveillance and reporting systems.
- Lack of systematic interinstitutional coordination mechanisms, leading to duplication of efforts.

- Need to strengthen weakened veterinary services, particularly in territories where transboundary diseases remain prevalent.

It was emphasized that the region needs to move toward more strategic planning, as “it is more valuable to look ahead and plan in a coordinated manner” rather than merely reporting past activities.

Update on the Global ASF Initiative 2026–2030

The Secretariat presented preliminary elements of the new Global ASF Initiative (2026–2030), including:

1. Early detection as a cross-cutting priority.
2. Strengthened biosecurity along the entire value chain.
3. Economic analysis to guide decision-making.
4. Prevention of environmental contamination.
5. Trade continuity and alignment with international standards.

It was agreed that these guidelines will be adapted to the specific context of the Americas during the update of the Regional Strategy to be carried out by the SGE-TSD.

Proposal to initiate the review and update of the Terms of Reference of the RSC, SGE-TSD, and SGE-AI

The Secretariat reported that, after more than 20 years of operation of the regional mechanism, it is necessary to update the Terms of Reference of the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) and the Standing Groups of Experts (SGEs). This need arises from several factors, including changes in the global GF-TADs structure, the merging of technical groups—such as the integration of ASF and CSF into the SGE on Transboundary Swine Diseases—and the importance of clarifying key aspects such as criteria for expert designation, duration of mandates, and working modalities.

Weaknesses were also identified in tracking recommendations and measuring their impact, reinforcing the need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation mechanisms within regional governance.

Members agreed that this review process should aim to improve effectiveness, coordination, and accountability, while avoiding unnecessary administrative burdens.

In this context, the RSC discussed the need to update the Terms of Reference to clarify roles and responsibilities, strengthen monitoring mechanisms, improve coordination between the RSC and SGEs, avoid duplication of efforts, and optimize decision-making processes.

It was agreed that this review will be conducted using a predefined methodology, with clearly designated responsibilities, and aligned with the ongoing update of the Global Governance of GF-TADs. Once finalized at the global level, its guidelines should be adopted and adapted within regional governance.

Review and approval of the 2026 activity calendar

Regarding planning for 2026, the Secretariat presented the preliminary calendar of meetings, which includes:

- A virtual meeting of the SGE on Avian Influenza in June;
- An SGE meeting on Transboundary Swine Diseases in July (date to be confirmed);
- A virtual SGE meeting in August;
- An RSC meeting scheduled for the second week of November.

During the discussion, reference was made to a recent meeting on avian influenza mainly focused on reporting aspects. In this context, it was suggested to incorporate topics related to advances and needs in diagnostics in future meetings, in order to balance the focus between epidemiological data management and laboratory technical aspects.

Members were also invited to review the proposed dates and provide feedback in case of conflicts with other institutional activities, in order to make timely adjustments.

Finally, it was recommended to improve the management of meeting invitations by sending calendar invites together with official communications, to facilitate organization and participation.

NEXT STEPS

Based on the presentations and discussions during the 20th Meeting of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for the Americas, the following next steps were established to guide regional work in 2026 and strengthen coordination on priority transboundary animal diseases:

Strengthening GF-TADs governance

- Initiate the review and update process of the Terms of Reference of the RSC and SGEs, defining responsibilities, methodology, and timelines.
- Establish a periodic monitoring mechanism to track progress, identify delays, and support evidence-based decision-making.
- Strengthening coordination between the RSC and SGEs, ensuring that strategic priorities are translated into concrete operational actions.

Interinstitutional coordination and joint planning

- Implement a simplified information-sharing mechanism among FAO, WOAHA, IICA, OIRSA, CAN, PAHO-PANAFTOSA, and other relevant partners to avoid duplication and optimize resources.
- Develop a regional mapping of ongoing initiatives, particularly in surveillance, diagnostics, biosecurity, and training, to identify synergies and cooperation opportunities.
- Promote joint annual planning among participating organizations, aligned with RSC-defined priorities.

Country support and capacity building

- Support countries in implementing priority actions in surveillance, biosecurity, movement control, and emergency preparedness for HPAI, ASF, CSF, and NWS.
- Develop specific strategies for countries with weakened veterinary services, with emphasis on Venezuela, prioritizing surveillance, diagnostics, and sanitary governance.
- Promote active and sustained country participation in SGEs, ensuring the designation of experts with continuity.

Laboratories, surveillance, and digitalization

- Strengthen the regional laboratory network by promoting interlaboratory exercises, shared use of capacities, and gap analysis for the designation of regional reference laboratories.
- Promote the digitalization of surveillance systems, including real-time reporting tools and epidemiological analysis.
- Support the implementation of active and syndromic surveillance, especially in high-risk areas and vulnerable value chains.

Regional implementation of the Global ASF Strategy 2026–2030

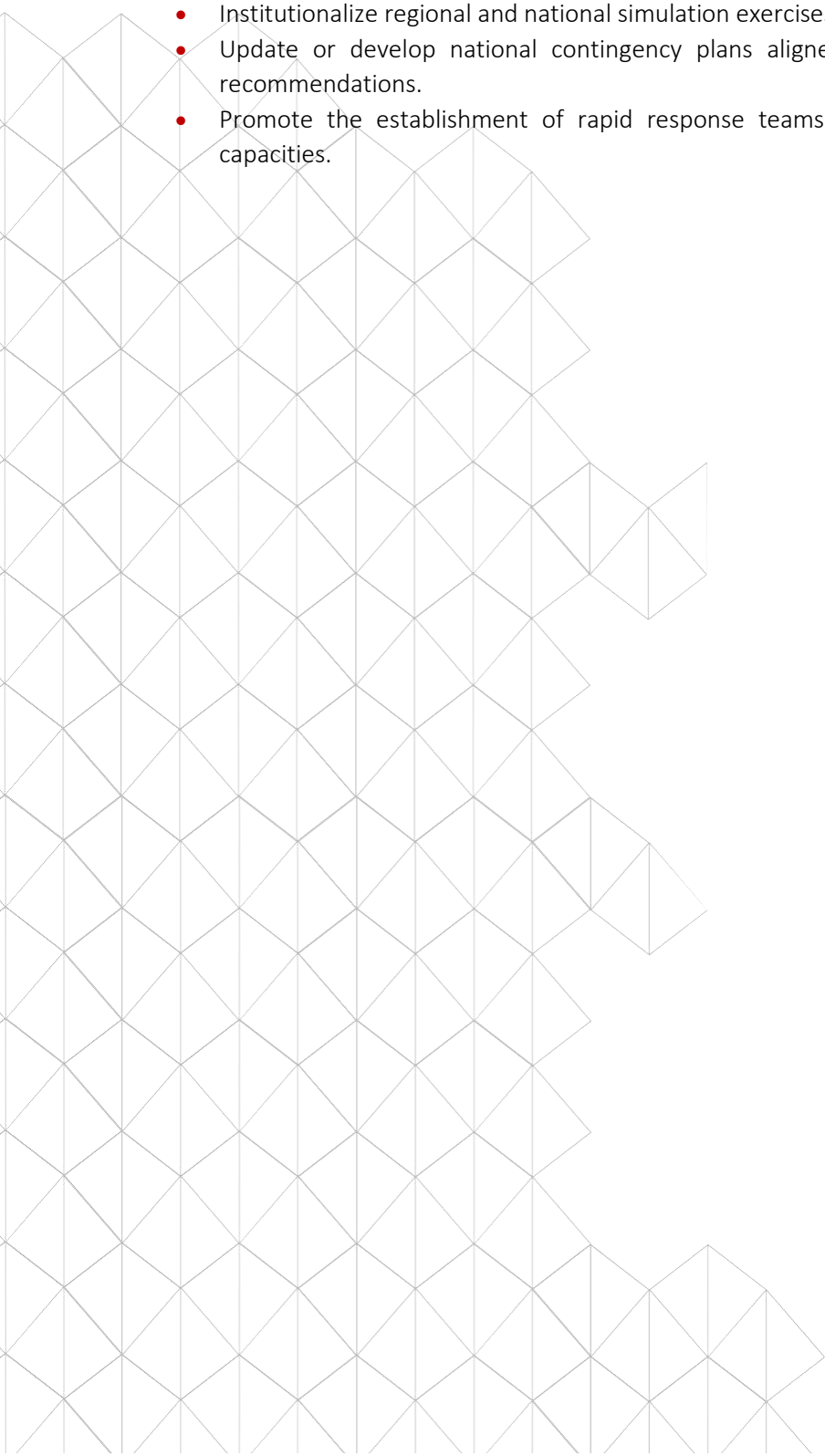
- Adapt global guidelines to the Americas context, prioritizing early detection, biosecurity, economic analysis, and trade continuity.
- Develop a regional ASF work plan, articulated with SGEs and international organizations.
- Identify funding opportunities and technical cooperation to support implementation in countries.

Risk communication and stakeholder engagement

- Develop harmonized risk communication materials targeting producers, travelers, hunters, transporters, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Promote coordinated regional campaigns, especially for ASF, HPAI, and CSF.
- Strengthening private sector and smallholder participation in biosecurity and surveillance actions.

Emergency preparedness and response

- Institutionalize regional and national simulation exercises, with emphasis on ASF, HPAI, and NWS.
- Update or develop national contingency plans aligned with WOAHP standards and GF-TADs recommendations.
- Promote the establishment of rapid response teams with adequate technical and logistical capacities.





Annex

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR ORGANIZATIONS

1. Strengthening coordination and avoiding duplication of efforts

- Establish a simple and periodic mechanism to map activities (not a complex repository that “fades over time”).
- Share annual work plans among agencies to identify synergies.

2. Consolidate regional laboratory networks

- Promote the sharing of diagnostic capacities.
- Prioritize sustainable investments (equipment, supplies, maintenance).
- Support the designation of regional reference laboratories.

3. Improve follow-up of recommendations and subsequent actions

- Create a lightweight monitoring system to assess progress.
- Support countries in implementation, not only issue recommendations.

4. Support countries with weakened veterinary services

- Develop specific strategies for territories with ongoing infections.
- Integrate institutional strengthening actions into regional projects.

5. Aligning regional strategies with global frameworks

- Incorporate the new guidelines of the Global ASF Strategy 2026–2030.
- Maintain flexibility to adapt them to the realities of the Americas.

FOR COUNTRIES

1. Strengthen surveillance and early warning

- Implement active and syndromic surveillance.
- Digitalize reporting systems.
- Ensure timely international notification.

2. Improve control of animal movements

- Strengthen border controls and informal routes.
- Apply risk-based measures in farms, transport, and markets.

3. Strengthening laboratory capacities

- Ensure availability of supplies and maintenance of equipment.
- Participate in regional and interlaboratory networks.
- Prioritize essential techniques before investing in advanced technologies.

4. Implement multisectoral biosecurity

- At farms, in transport, wildlife, and points of entry.
- Engage the private sector and small-holder producers.

5. Improve risk communication

- Develop harmonized materials for producers, travelers, and hunters.
- Align messages with WOAHA standards.

6. Actively participate in SGEs

- Nominate experts with continuity.
- Systematically share technical and epidemiological information.

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