

## Foreword

To most researchers, the understanding that humans are, biologically speaking, just one species among others is not a new concept. Nevertheless, much research has historically been carried out in a narrower context, focusing, for example, on either human health, farm animal health, wildlife conservation, or ecology. These limitations have brought unnecessary constraints to research and also to the work focusing on the prevention of diseases in various species. This probably is most apparent for contagious diseases, of which many will affect several different species, but is also true for other types of diseases of common nature such as metabolic diseases, cancer, and health issues related to environmental hazards. The concept of One Health and the understanding of the importance of linking physicians, veterinarians, other healthcare professionals, ecologists, biologists, and pharmacologists, and so on together to promote better understanding of disease ecology and epidemiology has become increasingly acknowledged during the 21st century. We have seen the formation of initiatives, such as networks, seminars, congresses, and specific transdisciplinary training and outreach programmes related to One Health. Globally, a specific ‘One Health Day’ has been announced to promote professional and public awareness of the link between humans, animals, and our ecosystems. It is of utmost importance that these efforts are encouraged and endorsed by all relevant research-funding bodies, being governmental research councils or private funds, to ensure that this open-minded approach can be integrated into future transdisciplinary research collaboration projects. Furthermore, it is crucial that the publication of high-quality research results encompassing the One Health approach is facilitated by journals whose readers can be found in a large spectrum of professions to ensure that it reaches those that can turn significant front edge results into good practice globally.

This is why we have decided to dedicate a special issue of the journal *Infection Ecology & Epidemiology* specifically to papers dealing with One Health research and training worldwide (1–6).

We must learn from each other while acknowledging the different approaches applicable in different regions. In this, there are more similarities than differences between our continents, and it is our belief that you will all find the examples and experiences shown in these papers useful and inspiring.

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