

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY BILL A5947

PROHIBITING IMPORTATION OF CERTAIN WILDLIFE AND
FISH, AND LIVE ANIMAL MARKET RESTRICTIONS

WORKSHOP IN APPLIED EARTH SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

FALL SEMESTER 2025

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DISCLAIMER

This report represents the final product of a six-month academic exercise completed by MPA in Environmental Science and Policy students at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA). It is intended solely for academic purposes and does not serve as a basis for policy implementation. This report does not claim any scientific authority. The views expressed are those of the authors alone and should be interpreted within the context of the academic exercise.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Zoonotic diseases pose a significant and growing threat to public health, economies and ecosystems. In New York State, the combination of high human mobility, a large wildlife import market and the operation of live animal markets with both domestic livestock and wildlife creates multiple high-risk interfaces for spillover events. New pathogens are more likely to emerge and develop into major public health emergencies when there is inadequate sanitation and insufficient regulatory oversight. The COVID-19 pandemic made clear the high costs of zoonotic spillover. New York State requires preventative, rather than reactive, regulatory infrastructure to prevent the next pandemic before it occurs.

Assembly Bill A5947 aims to reduce risk of zoonotic spillover by regulating two high-risk disease pathways in New York State: high-risk animal imports and live animal markets. It fortifies existing public health infrastructure by mandating communication between relevant state departments and increasing enforcement of new and existing regulations.

The implementation framework for Assembly Bill A5947 establishes two parallel implementation hubs, the New York State Wildlife Import Hub and the New York State Wildlife Sale Protection Hub, to be led by existing departments, and also facilitates cross-sector coordination mechanisms through a Zoonotic Risk Advisory Committee. This

committee provides scientific guidance and assists with risk assessments and updates to species lists.

Implementation will begin with the creation of the Zoonotic Risk Advisory Committee, convening research teams, and drafting a list of prohibited species for import. New hygiene and safety regulations for Live Animal Markets will then be prepared and published, with a five week pivoting period in which market operators adjust to new regulations and inspectors prepare to enforce the law. Warnings and fines will be issued to markets and importers out of compliance beginning four months after the enactment of the Bill.

Bill A5947 utilizes departments' existing enforcement and monitoring infrastructure to reduce zoonotic risk at minimal cost to the taxpayer; activities under bill A5947 will cost \$380,000 in the first year of implementation and decrease following the completion of one-time mandates.

Zoonosis is a significant public health risk in New York State. Bill A5947 will levy existing infrastructure to reduce that risk at a fraction of the cost of state-wide pandemic response. The following implementation plan employs a science-based approach to risk reduction that strengthens inter-agency coordination and improves equity outcomes for vulnerable residents in the State of New York.

ACRONYMS

AML	Agriculture and Markets Law, New York State
ECL	Environmental Conservation Law, New York State
LAM	Live Animal Market
NYSDAM	New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
NYSDOH	New York State Department of Health
NYS	New York State
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SOPS	Standard Operating Procedures
ZRAC	Zoonotic Risk Advisory Committee

01. BACKGROUND



Darwin Vegher (Unsplash)

1.1 The Environmental Problem: Zoonotic Disease Transmission

Zoonotic diseases represent a significant risk to public health. The World Health Organization defines “any disease or infection that is naturally transmissible from vertebrate animals to humans” as zoonotic.¹ While the total number of zoonoses is unknown, a 2001 study found that 62 percent of known human pathogens had zoonotic origins.² Zoonosis occurs when a pathogen “spills over” from one species to another, often due to close proximity.³ The COVID-19 pandemic, believed to have emerged from animal origins, demonstrates the global health risks associated with emerging zoonotic diseases.

Zoonotic diseases can emerge rapidly and unpredictably, while human-driven habitat destruction, climate change, and global wildlife trade are increasingly forcing wildlife, domestic animals, and humans into unnatural contact.⁴ Because humans have no immunity to these novel pathogens, zoonotic spillover can lead to widespread illness and death.⁵ Since humans have never faced these pathogens before, they have no immune memory and thus their response to new diseases is slow and often less effective. Among zoonotic diseases feature highly pathogenic viruses such as the Ebola virus, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (SARS-CoV), Middle East

respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), and Hendra virus, which are believed to exist in reservoirs such as bats and can be transmitted to humans (Figure 1).⁶ Beyond these biological factors, environmental changes are increasingly influencing zoonotic risk. An increasing amount of scientific literature has shown the link between climate change and the transmission of zoonotic diseases.⁷ Rising temperatures and humidity are widening the range of many insect-borne pathogens, providing more opportunities for inter-species

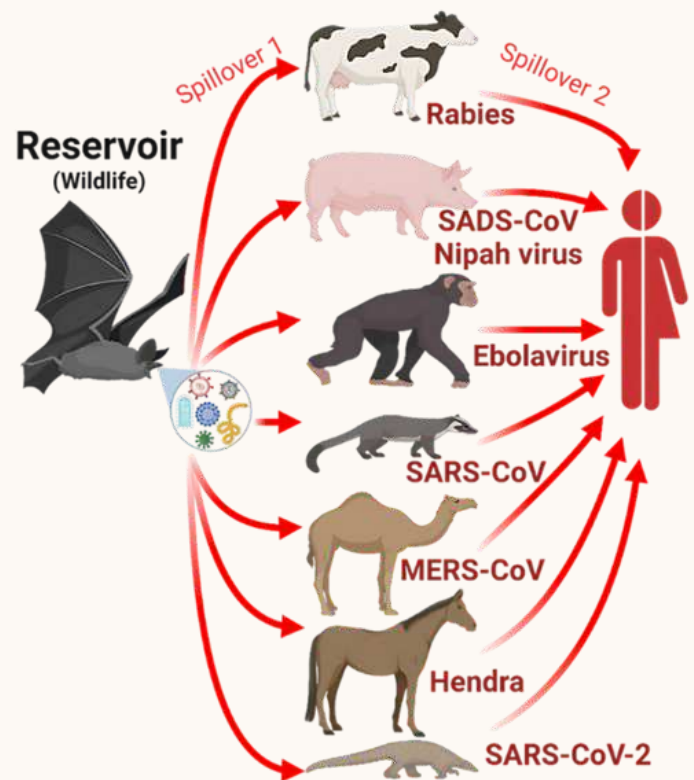


Figure 1. Recent cases of cross-species transmission from a wildlife host (left) to wildlife or domesticated species (middle) to humans (right).⁸

transmission and mutation.⁹ Climate instability has also been linked to immune suppression in animals, increasing their susceptibility to infectious and noninfectious diseases.¹⁰ Additionally, deforestation, urbanization, and extreme weather events disrupt food systems and habitat for animals and people, creating the conditions for disease to spread more rapidly between species.¹¹ Climate change has increasingly brought humans and animals into closer proximity, increasing the chances that zoonotic spillover occurs and a new disease spreads among human populations.¹²

1.1.1 ZOONOTIC RISK IN LIVE ANIMAL MARKETS AND THE WILDLIFE TRADE

The global wildlife trade and Live Animal Markets (LAMs) both raise key public health concerns for animal-human disease transmission. Recent pandemics such as

Ebola, SARS, and H1N1 (swine flu) have shown the urgent need for policymakers to address the factors contributing to the emergence and spread of infectious diseases. Many of these outbreaks originate from zoonotic sources, highlighting the intersection between humans, wildlife, domestic animals, and the environment. These events have reinforced the importance of proactive policies aimed at preventing future spillovers.

First, LAMs concentrate the main pathways in which zoonotic spillover occurs in a single setting. Overcrowded enclosures housing diverse domestic and wildlife species, inadequate sanitation, transport-related stress that weakens animals' immune systems, while on-site slaughtering aerosolizes blood and bodily fluids. People who work in LAMs or handle by-products from wild animals, as well as those living near dense wildlife populations, are particularly vulnerable to exposure to zoonotic diseases (Figure 2).¹³

Disease Risk Associated with Live Animal Markets

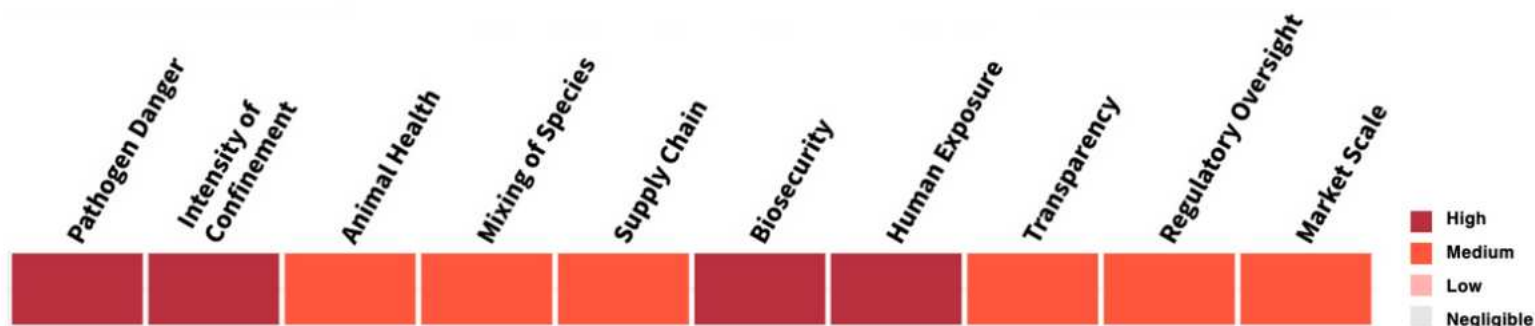


Figure 2.

Risk level of zoonotic disease spillover pathways in Live Animal Markets ¹⁴

These hazardous conditions have historically enabled the emergence of deadly diseases. For example, SARS is believed to have originated from masked palm civets in such environments.¹⁵

Second, the global wildlife trade creates potential pathogen pipelines.¹⁶ Global wildlife trade is a key driver behind the recent rise in emerging infectious diseases (Figure 3).¹⁷ The stress of transport weakens animals' immune systems and increases viral shedding, while close confinement of multiple species promotes cross-species transmission.¹⁸ The

introduction of non-native reptiles, amphibians, and mammals, many of which carry pathogens such as *salmonella spp.* or less unknown pathogens, into novel settings, increasing the likelihood of human exposure.¹⁹

1.1.2 ZOONOTIC RISKS IN NEW YORK STATE

The constant flow of people and animals in and out of New York through cars, public transportation, and tourism significantly increases the chance that a zoonotic pathogen

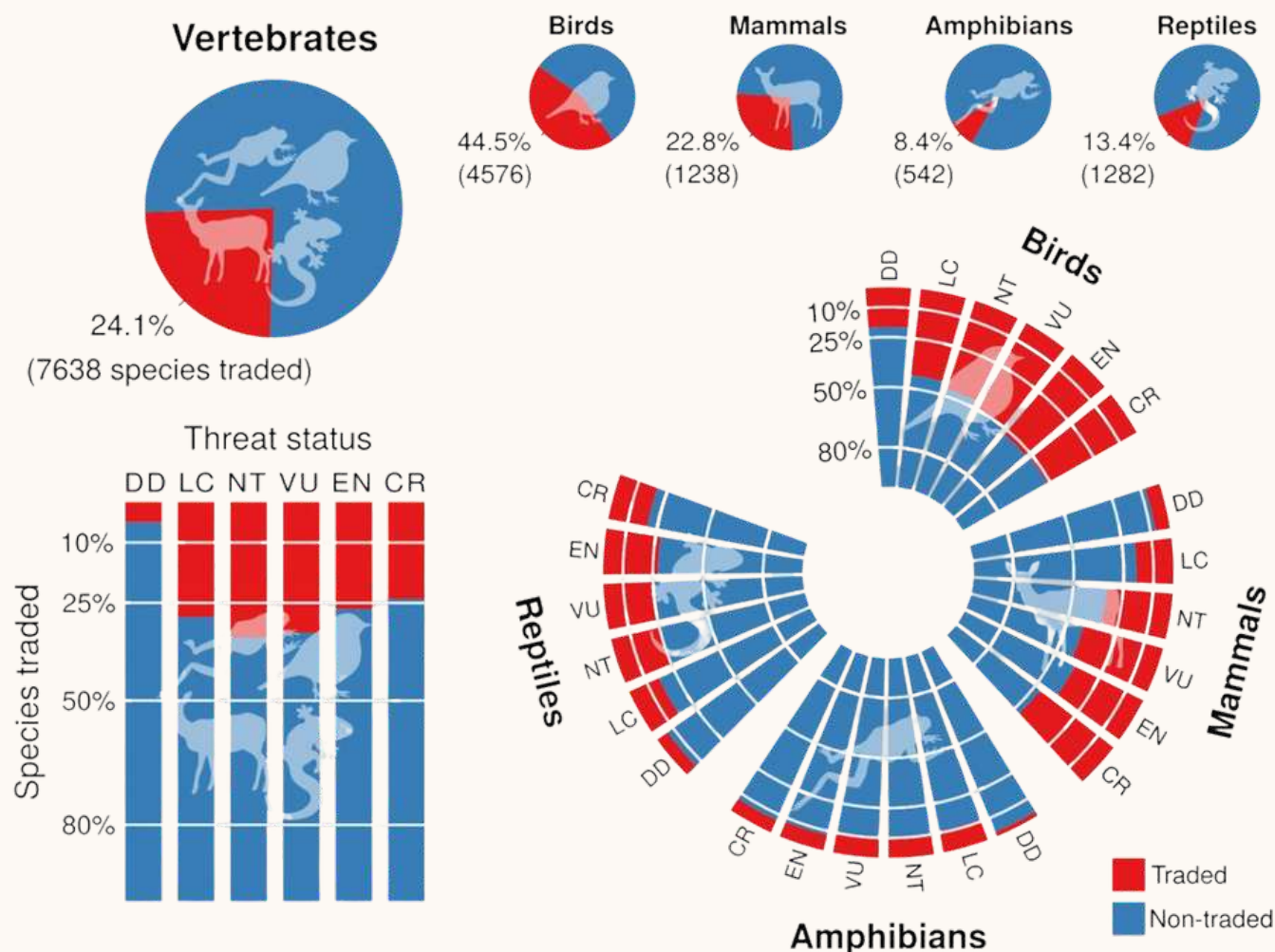
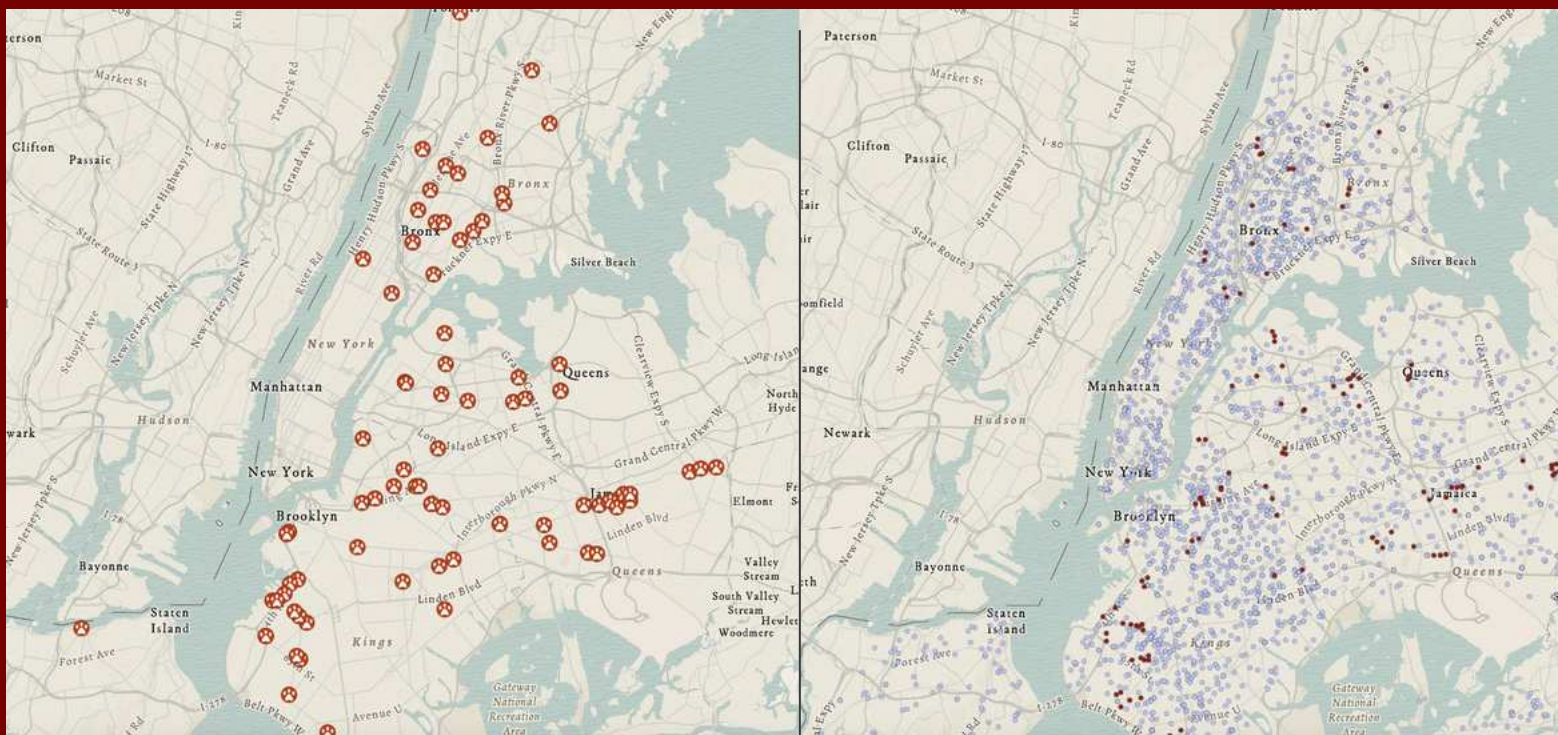


Figure 3. Global wildlife trade of terrestrial vertebrates. The figures in brackets indicate the total number of traded species. The threat status refers to the International Union for Conservation of Nature classification: data deficient, DD; least concern, LC; near threatened, NT; vulnerable, VU; endangered, EN; and critically endangered, CR.²⁰

in New York could spread rapidly across local, regional, and even international communities. There are approximately 80 LAMs in New York, most of which are located in densely populated areas near schools, homes, and hospitals in New York City (Figures 4 & 5). High-density co-housing, species mixing, and limited biosecurity can amplify pathogens (e.g., avian influenza), with potential occupational and community exposure.²¹ In 2025, concerns over public health were reaffirmed following outbreaks of H5N1, also known as bird flu, in seven live-bird markets in New York City.²² Though markets were shut down and zoonosis did not occur, this outbreak shows how LAMs

could be ground-zero for the next pandemic.

Wildlife imports represent material zoonotic risk in New York State. Wildlife imports into the United States originate from all over the world, as data on wildlife imports into the US between 2000 and 2013 indicate.²³ Furthermore, the State of New York is located in the regional port of entry with the highest number of wildlife shipments in the same period.²⁴ The central role of northeast ports of entry in wildlife imports characterizes New York State as a harbor of potential zoonotic disease-carrying species.



Figures 4 & 5. Confirmed live animal markets (left) and schools (right) in New York City as of 2021. Schools within 400 feet of LAMs are marked as red points.²⁵ Credits: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community.

1.2 The Legislation

1.2.1 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

Assembly Bill A5947 seeks to safeguard public health and native biodiversity by (1) restricting the importation and transport of designated wildlife and fish, and (2) tightening permitting and operational standards for live-animal markets. Bill A5947 amends two sections of the New York State law:

Environmental Conservation Law (ECL)

The bill introduces a new section, §11-1710, to prohibit the importation of certain wildlife and fish into the State.

Agriculture and Markets Law (AML)

The bill introduces new sections to Article 22-A to improve sanitation and hygiene and strengthen regulatory oversight of LAMs.

AB5947 was sponsored by Assembly Member Jo Anne Simon in February 2025



Credits. New York Assembly

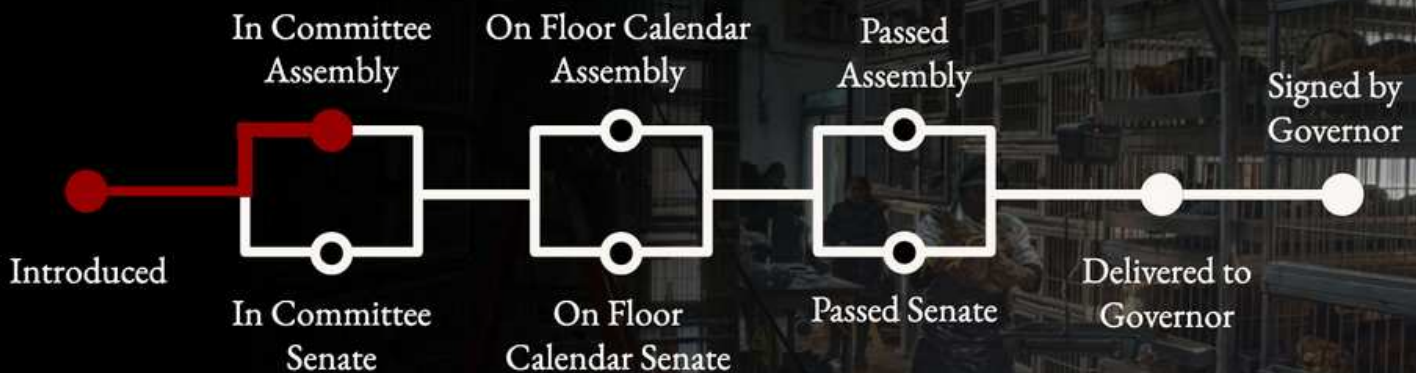
1.2.2 ROLE IN ADDRESSING ZOONOTIC DISEASE RISK

Assembly Bill A5947 addresses zoonotic risk by reducing the import of host-species into New York State and minimizing routes of zoonotic spillover in LAMs.

Reducing animal imports minimizes contact with high-risk wildlife species and potential for zoonotic spillover.²⁶ Scientific evidence demonstrates that zoonotic pathogens are not evenly distributed across species; instead, they are concentrated in a small number of wildlife groups that share ecological and physiological traits favoring viral maintenance and transmission.²⁷ The proposal to create a prohibited species list to reduce the diversity of species present in trade and public display would minimize the viral genetic pool at human-animal interfaces. This strategy follows the ecological network theory,

whereby reducing the number of reservoir hosts at an interface decreases the opportunity for viral spillover and recombination.²⁸

Live animal markets create unnatural aggregations of species, where stress, close confinement, and inter-species interactions facilitate viral shedding and transmission.²⁹ Although many zoonotic infections are preventable, current regulation in United States is not proportional to the risk level of these infections, yet regulators have often overlooked and underappreciated this issue.^{30,31} For this reason, the bill grants the NYSDEC the authority to suspend existing animal trade licenses, allowing for rapid intervention in markets, fairs, pet shops, and exhibitions, where amplification conditions—such as crowded, multi-species environments where animals are stressed and immune-suppressed—are higher.



Assembly Bill A5947 is currently in Committee Assembly, with a long path to passage. The bill continues a long-standing effort in New York to regulate high-risk wildlife imports and live animal markets. Earlier versions similarly required NYSDEC to produce a list of prohibited species and to strengthen market regulations, while other bills sought to ban LAMS outright.³²

1.2.3 POLITICAL & STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Support for A5947 is expected from public health organizations, animal welfare groups, food safety advocates and veterinary experts. The bill addresses two documented sources of spillover risk: wildlife imports and the operations of live animal markets. New York has repeatedly detected avian influenza in wild and captive birds, including in markets across all five boroughs, leading to testing requirements and temporary closures. The proposed oversight would help reduce disease transmission and protect public health, native species and agriculture.

The bill would reduce New Yorkers long-

term exposure to zoonotic hazards. At the same time, the bill may limit product availability and raise prices in communities where live animal markets serve as important cultural and culinary institutions.

Opposition is likely from live market vendors, wildlife importers and customers who rely on these markets. Many consumers are immigrants, and live animal markets often provide traditional foods that are difficult to source elsewhere. Their representatives may raise concerns about cultural heritage, affordability and the impact on small businesses. Although these groups have limited visibility, their concerns reflect meaningful implications for community identity and economic stability (Figure 6).

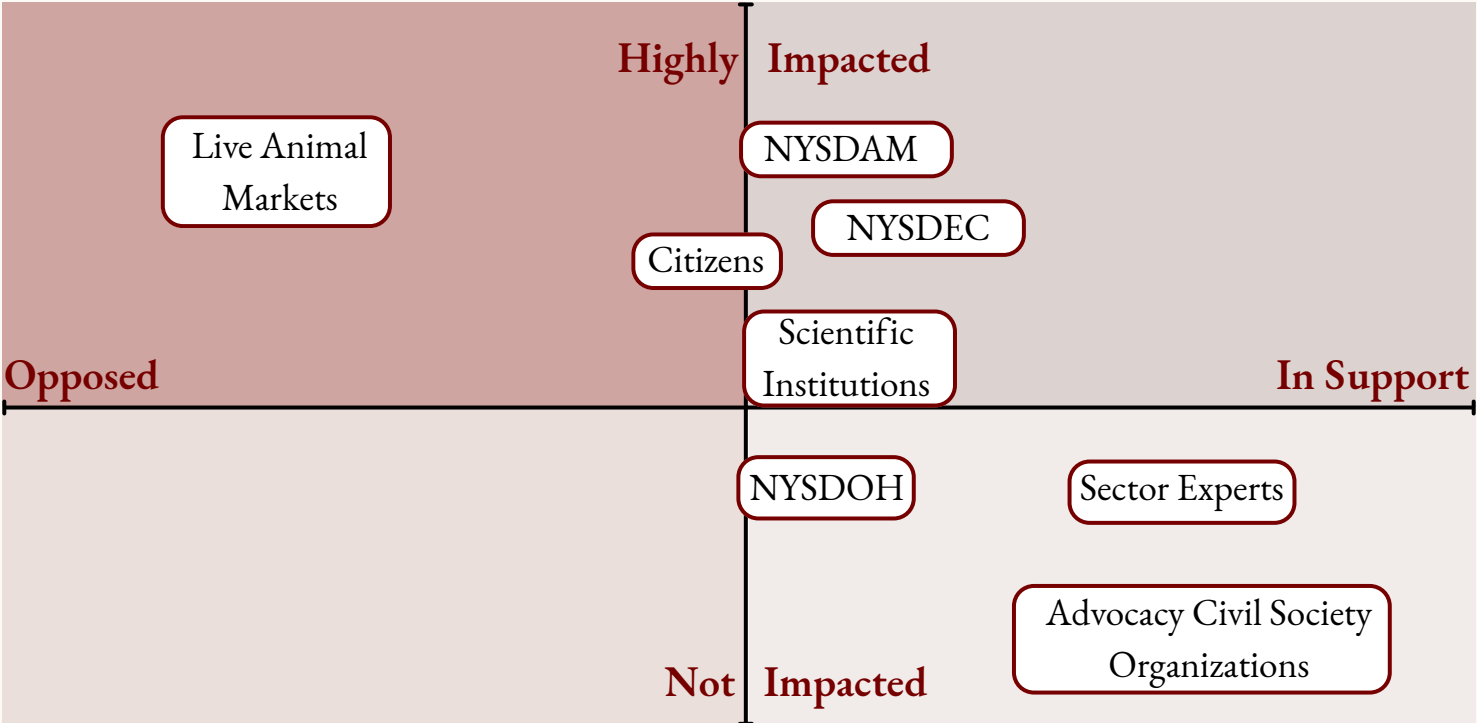


Figure 6. Stakeholder analysis based on gradients of support for the bill and degree of impact from its provisions.



02.

PROGRAM DESIGN & OVERVIEW



2.1 Considerations of the Program Design

2.1.1 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The main operational objectives of the bill is to prohibit the import of high-risk species and increase health and safety standards for LAMs. Aside from the legislative mandates, several sections of the bill remain open to administrative discretion:

Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) 11-1710: Animal Imports	
Mandatory	Discretionary
Creation of a Prohibited Species List for Import	The NYSDEC may add or remove species from the prohibited species list based on new scientific evidence.
Suspension of Licenses	The NYSDEC must consult with the NYSDAM and NYSDOH and retain discretion over the scope of such consultations. Licenses must be suspended upon scientific evidence of zoonotic transmission, and agencies must have discretion to establish the threshold that constitutes a violation of these rules.
Publication of Exemption Application	The NYSDEC has discretion over the structure of the exemption application. While universities, government agencies, zoos, and other research institutions are eligible, the Department has flexibility in assessing whether their applications are accepted, on a case by case basis.
Cooperation with NYSDOH and NYSDAM	Agencies can shape their communication structure, share data, and coordinate emergency response as they see fit. In doing so, community needs are taken into consideration, as well as market operational capacities.

These discretionary areas of the Bill allow for the design and implementation of supportive program design options. At the same time, these discretionary provisions are designed

through the lenses of the One Health framework (Figure 7), which recognizes the interconnection between animals, humans, and environmental factors when addressing

Agriculture and Markets Law (AML) 22-A: Live Animal Markets

Mandatory	Discretionary
Creation of Prohibited Species List for Sale	The NYSDAM holds discretion to determine which animals qualify as invasive species and whether they should be included or excluded from the list based on new scientific evidence. The NYSDAM decides whom to consult and retains flexibility in both the review process and the way it updates the list and retains discretion over how to enforce the penalties, as well as the process and timeline.
Publication and Enforcement of Increased LAM Regulations	The NYSDAM can determine how rules are determined and enforced in LAMs. Furthermore, the Department has discretion over housing conditions and animal welfare standards.

health policy challenges.³³ Each discretionary provision of the Bill was assessed through three different yet highly connected dimensions: economic, social, and health. Ultimately, a health-forward approach was chosen, as it focuses on immediately implementing measures to protect public

health. This option prioritizes data from infectious disease experts to ensure rapid responsiveness to emerging health threats. It also emphasizes animal welfare across all aspects of transport and market operations, aiming to reduce disease transmission and keep species safe.

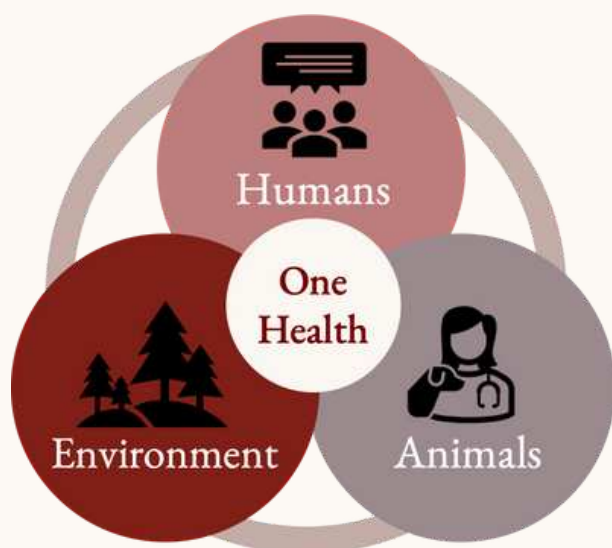


Figure 7.

The **One-Health framework** recognizes that human, plant, animal -both domestic and wild- and environmental health are interconnected. By identifying that zoonotic diseases do not emerge in isolation, the One Health framework addresses the full spectrum of disease control through governmental collaboration, communication and coordination.³⁴

2.2

Program Design & Organizational Overview

The proposed implementation framework for Assembly Bill A5947 establishes two parallel implementation hubs aligned with the Bill's provisions: the New York State Wildlife Import Hub and the New York State Wildlife Sale Protection Hub. Each hub will operate within the leadership of a State agency, NYSDEC and NYSDAM respectively, and is structured with existing specialized divisions that will be responsible for enforcement, public communication, stakeholder engagement and regulatory oversight. The framework also introduces a cross-sector coordination mechanism: the Zoonotic Risk Advisory Committee (ZRAC), which provides scientific guidance and ensures that species lists and zoonotic risk assessments are updated across both hubs (Figure 8).



Figure 8.
Implementation hubs

2.2.1 ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN

The **New York State Wildlife Import Hub** is led by the NYSDEC's Division of Fish and Wildlife (Figure 9). This Hub will be responsible for drafting the prohibited species list for import, soliciting advisory opinions from the NYSDAM, NYSDOH, and the ZRAC, handling cases of license issuance and suspension, and reviewing exemption applications.

NYSDEC's Division of Law Enforcement will enforce the Bill, and monitor compliance, and review potential violations of import licensing standards. Public outreach responsibilities fall to NYSDEC's Division of Communication, Education, and Engagement, representing the Hub's focal point for engagement with New York State's communities through the publication of advisory bulletins on changes in wildlife import

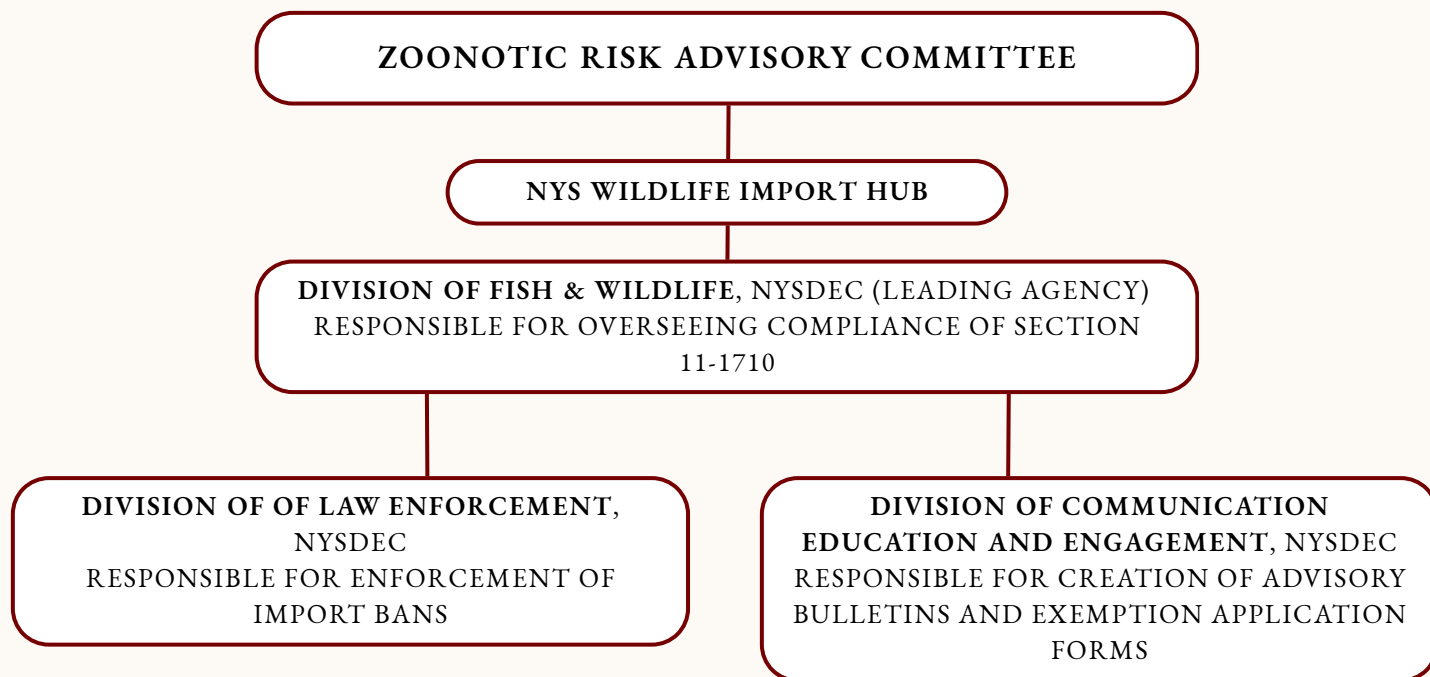


Figure 9.
NYS Wildlife Import Hub’s proposed organizational chart

guidelines, application forms for import ban exemptions, and informational materials about updated guidelines on wildlife imports.

The New York State Wildlife Sale Protection Hub (Figure 10) clusters functional divisions responsible for the review and enforcement of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of LAMs, under the guidance of NYSDAM’s Division of Animal Industry. Relevant staff oversee the establishment, review, and update of the prohibited species list for sale in LAMs, as well as the development of LAM SOPs, market inspections, and standard enforcement. In the event of noncompliance, NYSDAM’s Administration Department is responsible for collecting fines from LAM operators. When inspectors report repeated violations or unpaid fines, the department refers cases to the Counsel’s Office for legal action and charges

of misdemeanor. NYSDAM’s Division of Food Safety and Inspection will be responsible for inspecting LAMs and ensuring compliance with the new regulations. This Division will work alongside the Division of Animal Industry to handle noncompliance cases, enforce standards through seizures, written notices, education sessions for LAM operators, license revocation, or injunctive actions.³⁵ As the only new organizational unit created in the proposed organizational design, the **The Zoonotic Risk Advisory Committee** (Figure 11) is intended to address a key gap of the bill: the lack of a formal mechanism for scientific and cross-agency coordination. Coordinated by the U.S. Geological Survey’s National Wildlife Health Center, the Committee convenes public and private sector experts to advise the creation, review, and update of the standards for the import and sale of wildlife. While it does not

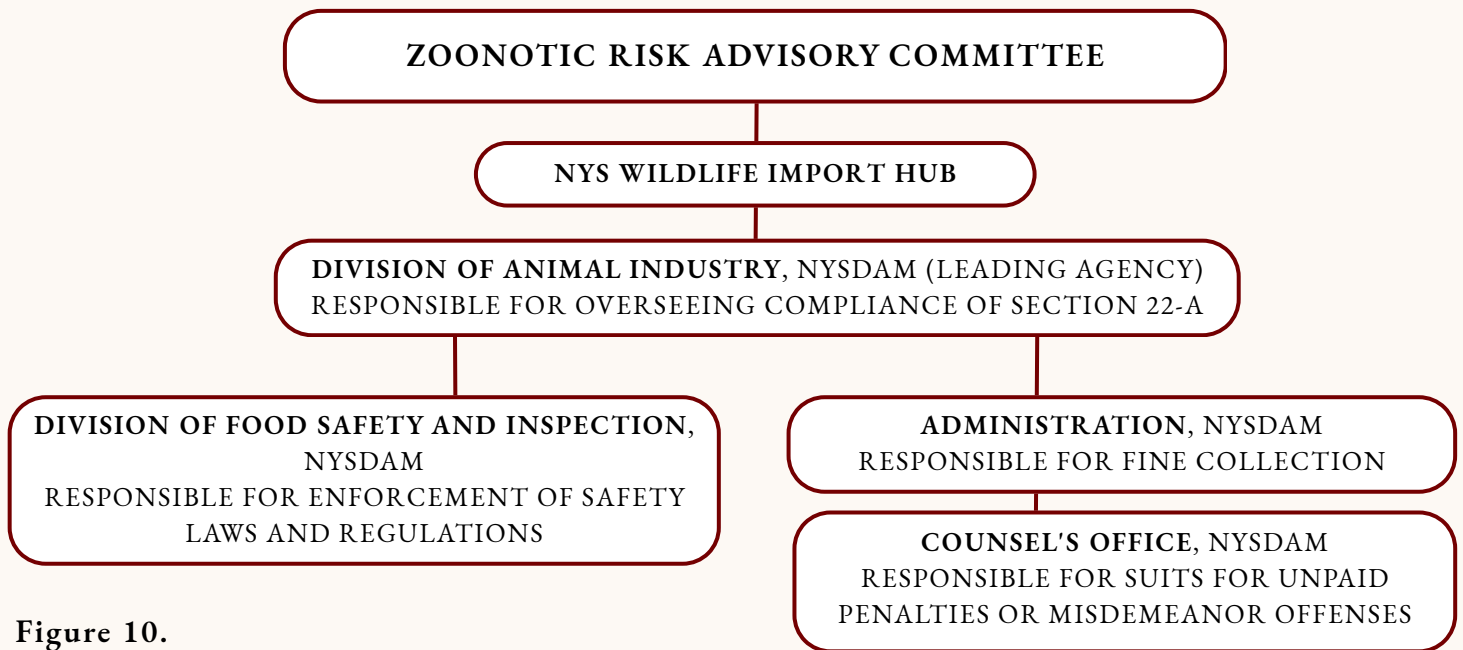


Figure 10.

NYS Wildlife Sale Protection Hub’s proposed organizational chart

have enforcement authority, it assists with risk assessments, updates to species lists, and coordination among agencies. **Appendix 5.1** provides a consolidated chart illustrating the

institutional focal points, coordination pathways, the implementation hubs, and the ZRAC as a supporting body.

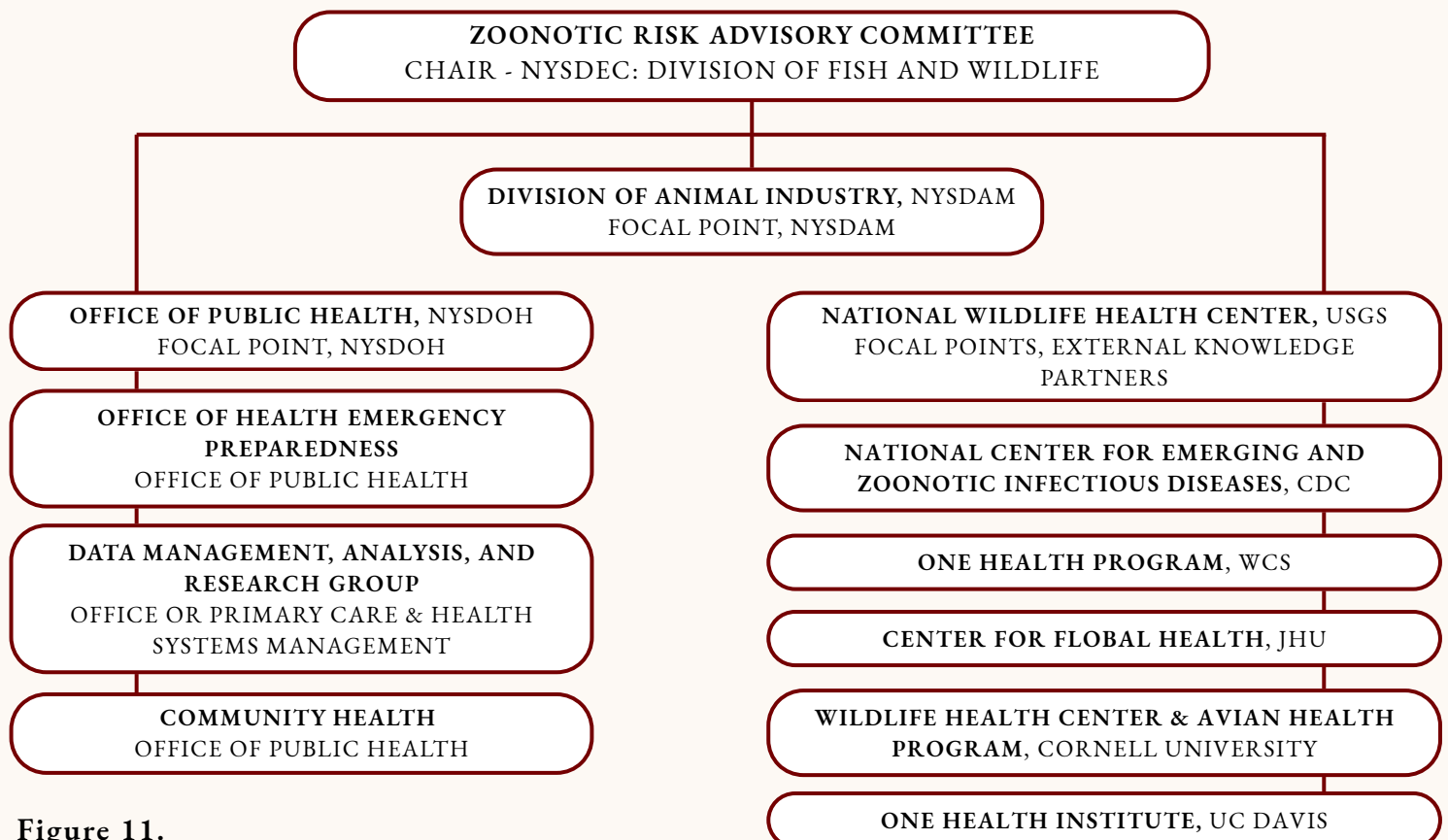


Figure 11.

Zoonotic Risk Advisory Committee’s proposed organizational chart

2.2.2 STAFFING PLAN

Instead of creating new permanent units, the framework relies on current staff at NYSDEC, NYSDAM and NYSDOH. It designates dedicated time and responsibilities for these employees to manage both the launch and continued operation of the framework. Roles range from program leadership and exemption review to coordinating inspections and handling zoonotic diagnostics.

A detailed breakdown of staff roles, estimated time commitments and agency assignments is provided in **Appendix 5.2**.



Credit: Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals

2.3 Feedback & Reporting Mechanisms

2.3.1 PERFORMANCE METRICS

The successful implementation of New York State Assembly Bill A5947 requires a performance management system to evaluate program effectiveness and manage outcomes. This proposed system creates transparency and accountability across the two operational hubs and ZRAC, outlined above.

Performance metrics evaluate the success of the bill's dual mandates: wildlife import regulation and LAMs oversight. The system employs metrics for both production outputs and real-world impact outcomes. These metrics are detailed in **Appendix 5.3**.

2.3.2 DATA COLLECTION

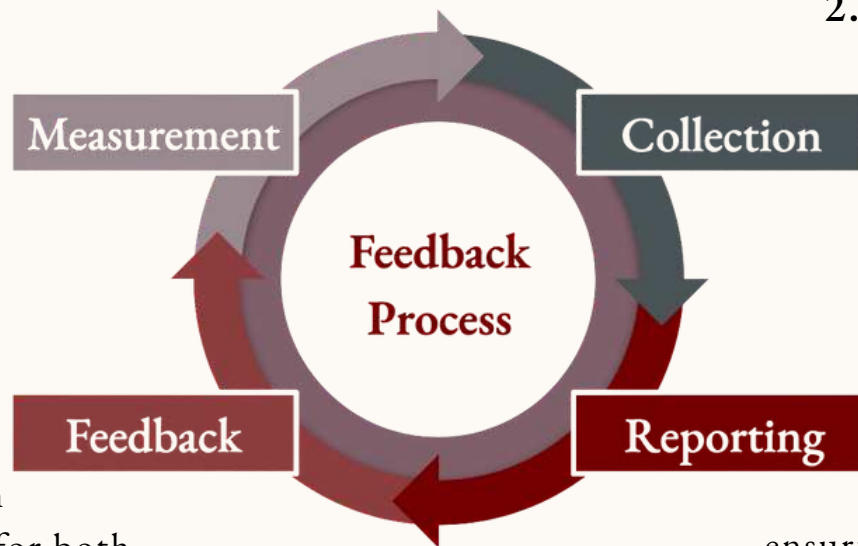
Data collection responsibilities are distributed across agencies according to their operational roles, and will build on existing data collection systems currently

in place at NYSDEC, NYSDAM, the Division of Food Safety and Inspection and the Office of Public Health. **Appendix 5.4** outlines the data points, collection method, frequency and agency responsible for data collection.

2.3.3 REPORTING

The reporting structure establishes a clear hierarchy for data flow from field operations through leadership levels to executive oversight, ensuring that performance

metrics reach appropriate decision-makers with the necessary frequency and detail (Figure 12). Field staff and analysts collect and report measurement data directly to their program leaders. The Food Inspection Unit, which reports to the Division of Food Safety and Inspection, provides market compliance data. NYSDEC enforcement officers



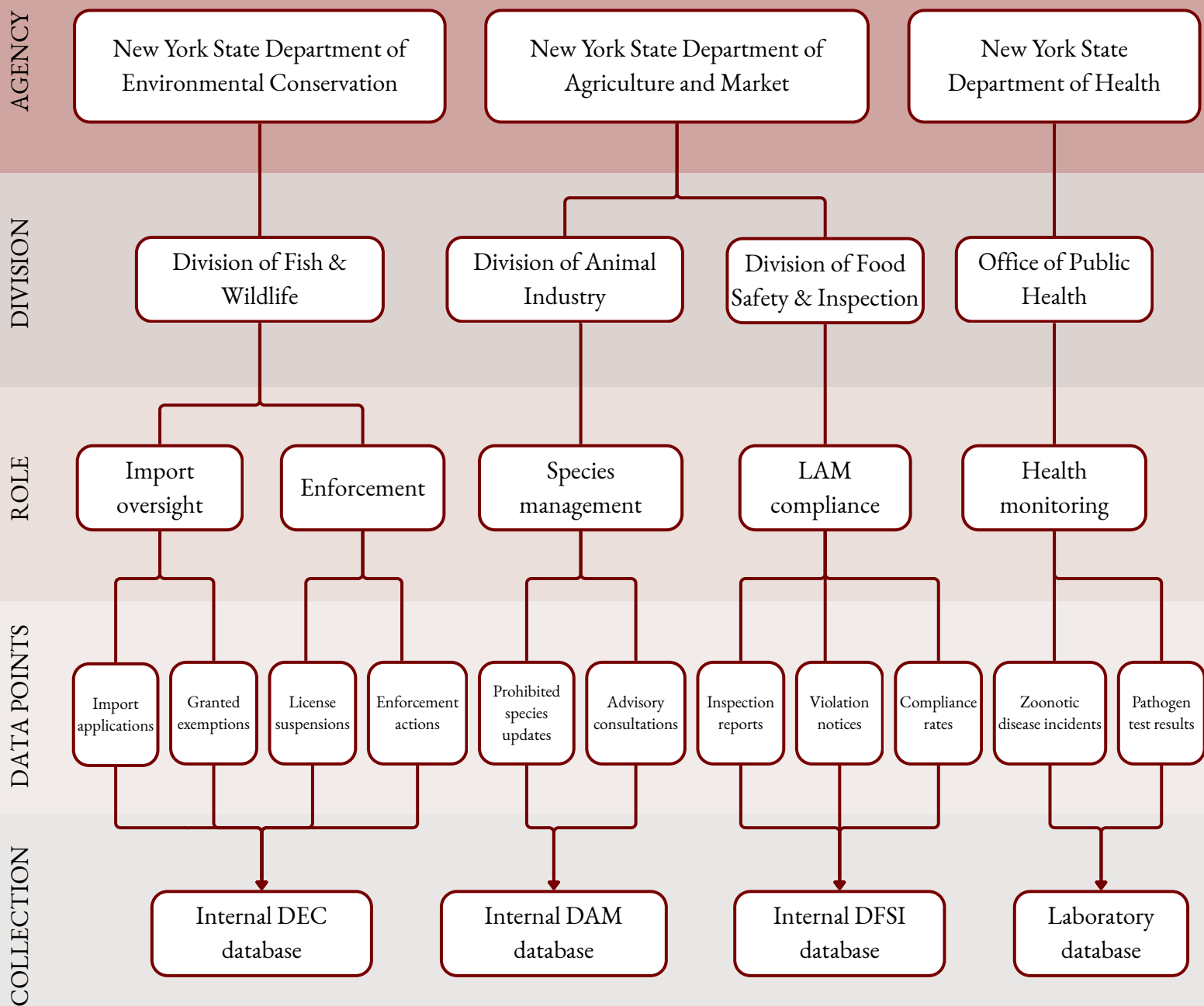


Figure 12. Flow of relevant data indicating collection method, data points, role, and division

document violations and fines. Import control staff track applications and exemptions. These front-line personnel enter data into their respective divisional databases as activities occur, providing real-time information flow.

2.3.4 FEEDBACK

The feedback process allows staff to make program improvements through a simplified response system triggered by specific outcomes. Triggers and suggested corrective actions are outlined in **Appendix 5.5**.



03. FINANCING AND LOGISTICAL STRATEGY

3.1

Budget and Revenue Plan

3.1.1 CONSIDERATIONS OF THE BUDGET AND REVENUE PLAN

The following budget and review plan estimates the total funding required and describes funding allocation of financial resources across the main activities that are essential to operationalizing the Bill's provisions.

This budget outlined in this section is for the first year of implementation, recognizing that both costs and revenues are expected to decrease in subsequent years. Initial expenditures will be highest in the early stages (i.e., first quarter) of the program as foundational systems are established and staff become familiar with new procedures. As State agencies, importers, and LAM participants gain experience with regulatory requirements, operational efficiencies and cost reductions are anticipated.

3.1.2 OVERVIEW OF FUNDED ACTIVITIES

Funding is required to support the full range of activities mandated by the Bill. These activities will be carried out by existing personnel within state agencies, who will assume responsibilities

related to regulatory oversight, disease surveillance, enforcement, stakeholder engagement, etc. While the tasks can be integrated into ongoing agency operations, targeted funding is essential to address increased workloads and acquire specialized expertise.

The proposed funding is divided into two categories:

1. Personnel Costs: The program will leverage existing personnel and resources within relevant public entities. Responsibilities will be distributed across departments that already possess the technical expertise and administrative capacity needed to execute the bill's provisions. Funding in this category will support staffing needs. This may involve cross-agency coordination for data collection and preparation of reports.
1. Non-Personnel Costs: Resources will be required to strengthen diagnostic capacity. This includes procuring new equipment for inspectors, communicating about the program to all stakeholders, implementing technical upgrades, and utilizing existing centralized databases to ensure accurate and timely results.

3.1.3 BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

The development of this budget is based on several assumptions due to uncertainties that exist at this stage of implementation. These assumptions inform cost estimates for staffing, equipment, systems, and projected revenues associated with the bill’s enforcement.

Key assumptions include:

- 1. Staffing Capacity: State agencies currently have sufficient personnel to carry out the activities required by the bill. New hires will only be made if program leaders determine that additional staff are necessary.
- 2. Salary Estimates: Staffing cost calculations are based on data from the NYS Office of Employee Relations. For analyst and program leader positions, Council 82 (C82) salary schedule was used Salary Grade (SG) 21 was used.³⁶ For analyst positions, and SG 25 for program leader positions.³⁷

- 3. ZRAC Compensation: Members of the ZRAC will serve without stipends or honoraria, considering the Committee functions as an honorary body.
- 4. Travel Costs: No additional travel funding is required for LAM or port inspections.
- 5. Monitoring Platform: Existing agency reporting infrastructure will be used.
- 6. Inspections: Costs associated with LAM and port inspections are assumed to increase by 20%.
- 7. Expanded Testing: Testing costs are expected to rise by 20% using Bird Flu tests as a parameter.³⁸
- 1. Outreach: 100 brochures will be distributed at each LAM for basic campaign and training materials.
- 10. Technology: We are assuming 4 years of depreciation.³⁹

NYSDEC: USD 211,765
NYSDOH: USD 9,764
NYSDAM: USD 158,365

Total Program Budget:
USD 379,894
Total Program Revenue:
USD 7,800

The line-item budget in **Appendix 5.6** provides a detailed breakdown of all cost components specifying the expenditures necessary for implementing the bill. **Figure 13** indicates funding breakdown by department, personnel, and equipment needs.

3.2 Budget



Figure 13. Breakdown of program costs by department, personnel, and equipment needs

3.2.1 REVENUE PLAN

The revenue plan projects fines imposed for non-compliance with the bill's provisions. In line with the One Health framework, which emphasizes strong enforcement, violations following the first written warning will result in a fine of USD 800. For repeated offenses, the maximum penalty of USD 1,000 will be applied.

Our revenue projection assumes a 20% non-compliance rate among the 82 LAMs in NYS in

the first year, half of whom (i.e., 8 LAMs) will be identified. Of these 8 LAMs, we assume 2 to comply after receiving the first written warning, leaving 6 LAMs subject to the first penalty of USD 800 (USD 4,800 total). We further assume that, after this first sanction, 50 percent of the remaining non-compliant LAMs will begin complying, so only 3 LAMs will incur a second penalty of USD 1,000 (USD 3,000 total). Based on these assumptions, the projected revenue is estimated at USD 7,800.00 for the first year.

3.3

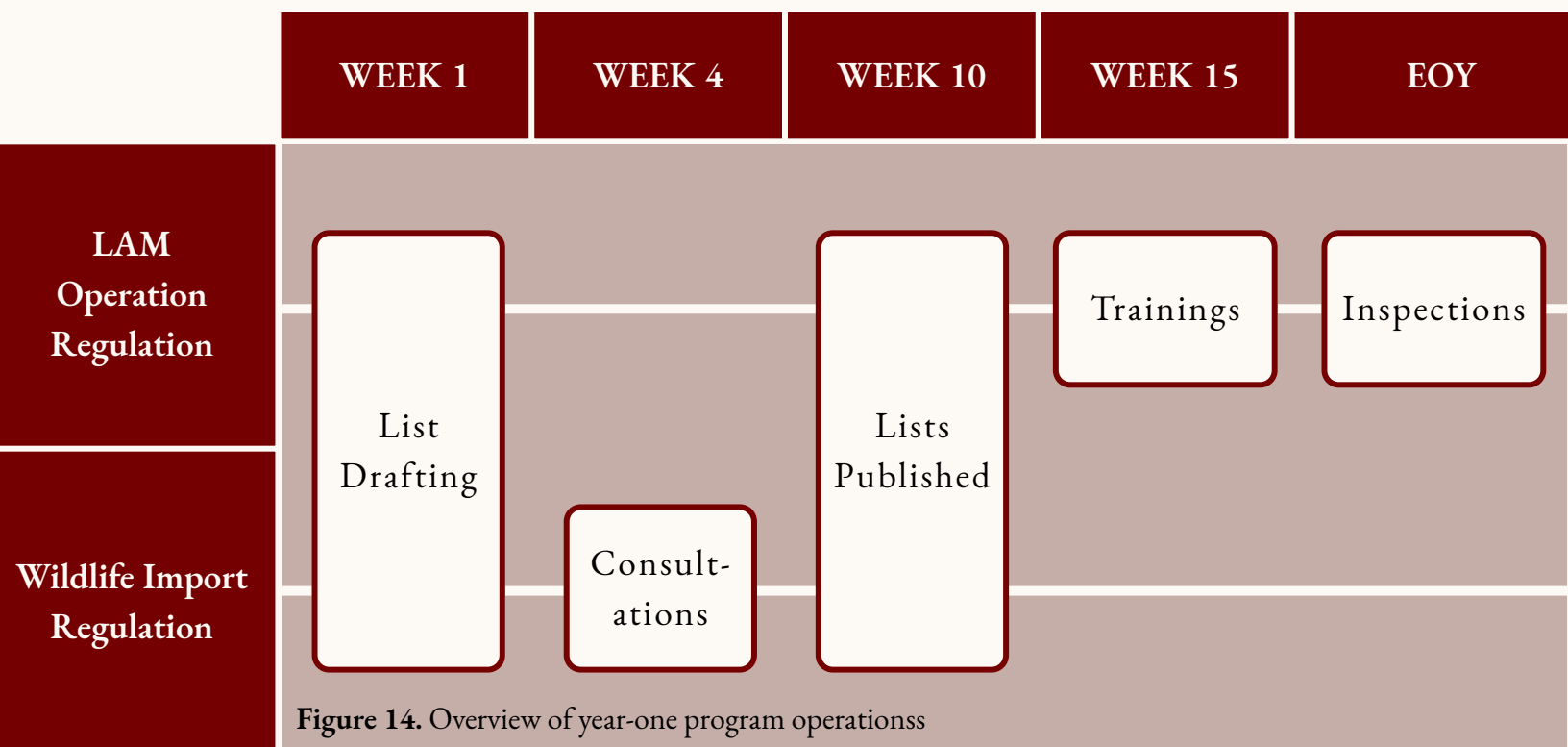
A5947 in Year One

As highlighted previously, three key agencies (NYSDEC, NYSDAM and NYSDOH) will share responsibility for launching and managing the program in its first year. Their roles align with their existing mandates and reflect the two core components of the bill: regulating high-risk wildlife imports and strengthening oversight of LAMs.

NYSDEC will lead the development of the Prohibited Animal Import List and the exemption process. Working in coordination with NYSDAM and the Zoonosis Risk Advisory Committee (ZRAC), the agency will finalize and publish the list and create an

exemption application that allows for case-by-case review. Once these tools are in place, NYSDEC will begin screening exemption requests and coordinating with ZRAC whenever expert input is required.

NYSDAM will oversee the development and publication of the Prohibited Species List for live animal markets. After the list is released, the agency will communicate the new requirements to market operators and guide them through an adjustment period that allows businesses time to pivot their sourcing and operations before enforcement begins. NYSDAM will also coordinate inspection



planning and ensure operators understand the expectations for compliance. ZRAC's role is advisory and scientific. Early in the rollout, the committee will issue an assessment of species of concern and associated zoonotic risks. Throughout the year, ZRAC will meet with NYSDEC and NYSDAM to provide feedback on both prohibited lists and to advise on exemption decisions. Its input is meant to keep the regulatory framework grounded in current science.

Once the regulatory tools are published and operators have had time to adjust, NYSDAM and NYSDOH inspectors will begin routine compliance checks at LAMs. Inspections will

occur periodically throughout the year and will follow a predictable sequence: inspection, followed by warning or certificates of compliance and fines for violations. This recurring cycle is designed to support a smooth transition for operators while ensuring that the new public-health and animal welfare standards are upheld.

These tasks create a coordinated Year-1 implementation structure: NYSDEC develops the import framework, NYSDAM manages the market-side regulations and enforcement, NYSDOH supports the inspection regime and ZRAC ensures that all decision-making remains informed by up-to-date zoonotic risk analysis.





04. KEY INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1

Key Insights

1. ZOONOSIS IS A PUBLIC HEALTH RISK IN NY

The risk of zoonotic disease transmission from animals to humans remains a significant public health concern in New York State. Beyond its direct health impact, zoonotic disease transmission can disrupt food production systems and supply chains, ultimately leading to broader economic consequences. Therefore, community well-being and economic stability are highly correlated with efficient prevention, as zoonotic diseases outbreaks can impact public health safety.

2. PREVENTION IS CHEAPER THAN RESPONSE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, over 7.5 million New Yorker's contracted coronavirus. The cost to state of treating thirty of those patients during the height of the pandemic was approximately \$380,000; the total budget of implementing Bill A5947. Provisions in the current bill will improve New York State's ability to prevent zoonotic spillover at a fraction of the cost of pandemic response.

3. NEW YORK HAS THE INFRASTRUCTURE TO REDUCE RISK

Addressing these challenges demands sustained, interdisciplinary OneHealth research and science-based policies. Assembly Bill A5947 would curb high-risk wildlife imports and close unhygienic live markets to sever critical links in the transmission chain and foster a more resilient, adaptive living system. The program makes sure that all agencies involved have the equipment, technology, and the personnel with certified expertise and subject-specific knowledge to address the most pressuring zoonotic challenges. In doing so, a key priority is to maximize the impact of public spending while avoiding wasteful expenditures.

1. **STRENGTHEN INTERAGENCY COORDINATION**

A successful application of Assembly Bill A5947 will demand considerably greater integration between New York's current environmental, agricultural, and public-health agencies. The employment of inter-agency coordinating mechanisms like common databases, coordinating inspection protocols, and common triggers for emergency responses, is consonant with One Health governance best practices that promote common surveillance and cross-sector policy making.

2. **IMPROVE EQUITY AND MAINTAIN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**

Equity concerns should be at the forefront of New York's efforts to revamp wildlife trade and zoonotic-risk regulations. As demonstrated in the political and issue review, policy initiatives can create a differential impact on the perspective of the immigrant, low income, and small-business populations. To stay pro-business while protecting public health, agencies should pair new rules with multilingual guidance, stepped penalties, and low-cost technical assistance. These new rules can help markets come into compliance rather than face immediate closure.

3. **RETAIN A SCIENCE-BASED APPROACH**

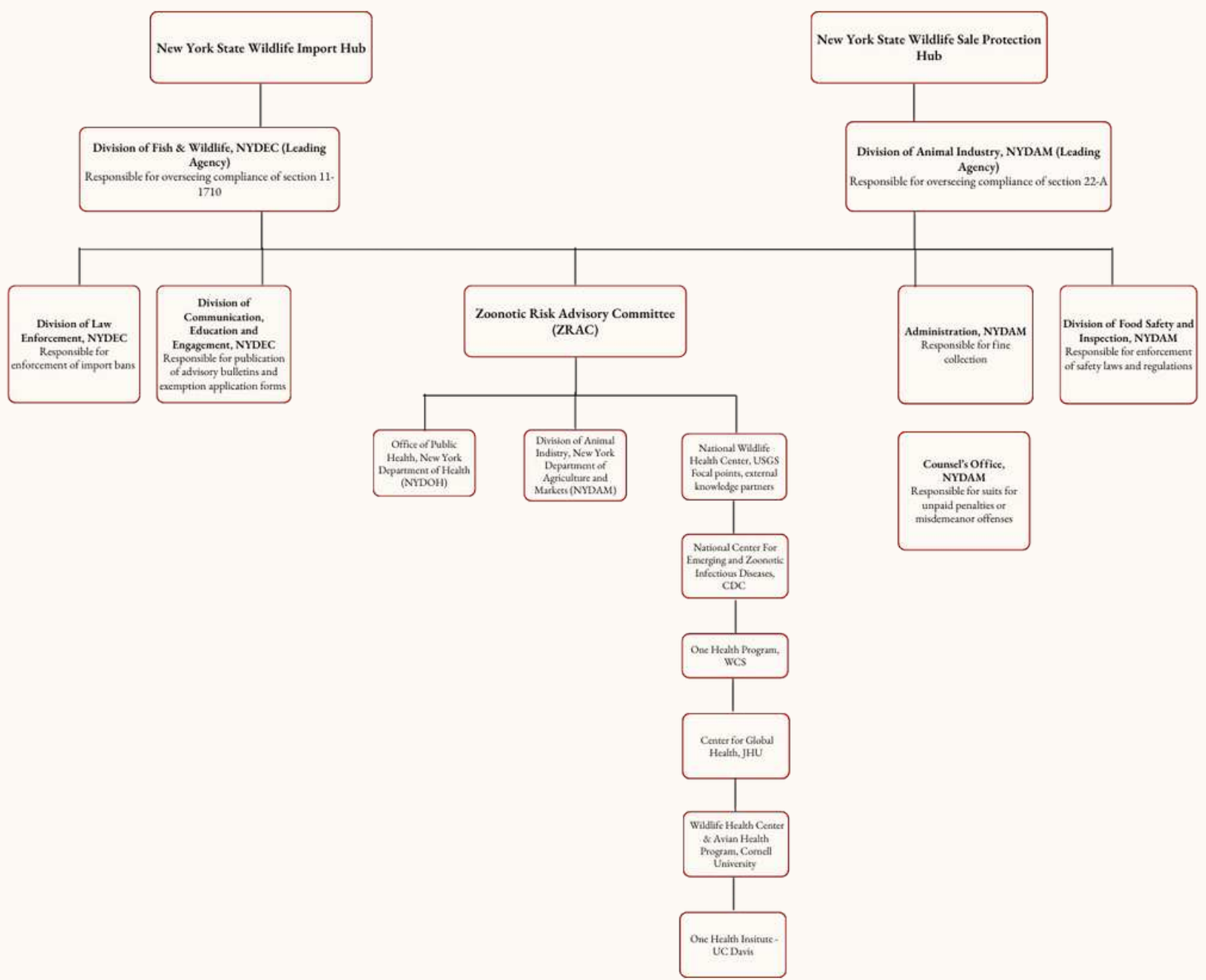
Given widespread misinformation about zoonotic risk and wildlife trade, retaining a strong science-based foundation is essential. An evidence-based implementation strategy which corresponds to both the US Centers for Disease Control and OIE guidelines can help prevent zoonosis and safeguard public health.



05. APPENDIX

5.1

Organizational Chart



5.2

Staffing Plan

Job Title	Department and Division	Personnel Type	Hours per week	Number of weeks	Staff Required
Program Leader, Foreign Animal Inspections	NYSDEC, Division of Fish & Wildlife	Government Personnel	20	8	1
Research Associate, Environmental Health	NYSDEC, Division of Fish & Wildlife	Government Personnel	20	8	3
Liaison, ZRAC	NYSDOH, Office of Public Health; NYSDAM, Division of Animal Industry	Government Personnel	20	8	4
Committee member, ZRAC	External Institutions	External Experts	2	8	6
Exemption Screening Specialist	NYSDEC, Division of Fish & Wildlife	Government Personnel	20	Ongoing	3
Associate, Animal and Market Safety	NYSDAM, Division of Animal Industry	Government Personnel	16	8	3
Program Leader, Live Animal Market Compliance	NYSDAM, Division of Food Safety and Inspections	Government Personnel	6	13	1
LAM inspectors	NYSDAM, Division of Food Safety and Inspections	Government Personnel	2	40	16

5.3

Performance Metrics by Program Area

Program Area	Metric	Target	Timeline
Market Compliance	Number of compliant markets	Track baseline, target 90% compliance	Year 1
	Number of first violations/warnings	Track baseline for trend analysis	Year 1
	Number of repeat violations/fines	<15% of total violations	Year 2+
	Market closure actions	Track and report quarterly	Ongoing
	Inspection completion rate	100% initial inspections	Year 1
	Average time between violation and enforcement action	<7 days for violations requiring immediate action	Year 1+
	Additional pathogen tests conducted	Track and report	Ongoing
ZRAC Establishment	ZRAC formation	Complete	Month 3
	Prohibited species list (import)	Published	Month 5
	Prohibited species list (LAM)	Published	Month 5
	Meeting frequency	Monthly	Ongoing
Animal Import Control	Number of confiscated animals at ports	Track and report quarterly	Ongoing
	Import applications submitted	Process within 30 days	Ongoing
	Import applications approved/denied	Track approval rate	Ongoing
	Exemption applications processed	90% within 30 days	Year 1+
	Animal import list creation	Complete	Month 5

5.4 Data Collection

Trigger Type	Specific Threshold	Responsible Authority
Process Delays	Exemption processing >30 days	NYSDEC Hub Program Leader
	Inspection backlog >30 markets in every inspection period (quarters)	NYSDAM Division Food Safety and Inspections Program Leader
Compliance Issues	Market compliance rate <60%	NYSDAM Hub Program Leader
	Import compliance rate <100%	NYSDEC Hub Program Leader
	Repeat violations >20% of total	NYSDAM Program Leader
Public Health	Disease outbreak linked to market/import	NYSDOH/NYSDAM Hub Program Leader
	Multiple pathogen detections	NYSDOH Office of Public Health
Resource Constraints	Staff vacancy >30 days	NDYEC/NYSDAM Program Leader

5.5 Performance Triggers

Agency	Division	Role	Data Points	Collection	Frequency
NYSDEC	Division Of Fish & Wildlife	Import oversight	Import applications, exemptions granted	Internal DEC database	Biweekly
	Division Of Fish & Wildlife	Enforcement	License suspensions, enforcement actions	Internal DEC database	Biweekly
NYSDAM	Division Of Animal Industry	Species management	Prohibited species updates, advisory consultations	Internal DAM database	As updated
	Division Of Food Safety & Inspection	LAM compliance	Inspection reports, violation notices, compliance rates	Internal DFSI database	After each inspection
NYSDOH	Office Of Public Health	Health monitoring	Zoonotic disease incidents, pathogen test results	Laboratory database	As conducted

5.6

Year One Budget Overview

	Hours per staff	Staff	Total
NYSDEC			\$ 211,765.38
Program Leader, Foreign Animal Inspections	160	1	\$ 10,946.25
Research Associate, Environmental Health	160	3	\$ 25,386.00
Exemption Screening Specialist	1040	3	\$ 165,009.00
Wildlife Import Surveillance Officer	96	2	\$ 10,154.40
Equipment costs			\$ 269.73
NYSDAM			\$ 158,365.34
Liaison, Zoonotic Risk Advisory Committee	160	2	\$ 16,924.00
Associate, Animal and Market Safety	128	3	\$ 26,271.00
LAMs Inspectors	80	16	\$ 67,696.00
Program Leader, Live Animal Market Compliance	80	1	\$ 4,231.00
Equipment Costs			\$ 43,243.34
NYSDOH			\$ 9,764.07
Liaison, Zoonotic Risk Advisory Committee	80	1	\$ 4,231.00
Liaison, Zoonotic Risk Advisory Committee	80	1	\$ 5,473.13
Equipment costs			\$ 59.94
Total Year 1 Budget			\$ 379,894.79

5.7

Master Calendar

Task	Personnel / Division	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9
1.1 Communicate with NYDAM, NYDOH,	List of Import Program									
1.2 Designate staffs in list research team and	List of Import Program									
2.1 Literature review on species and related	List of Import Research									
2.2 Draft 1 List of Prohibited Animal of Import	List of Import Program									
3.1 First meeting on the List of Import	List of Import Program									
3.3 Modification of draft 1 according to the	List of Import Research									
3.3 Modification of draft 2 according to the	List of Import Program									
5.2 Finalize the List of Import	List of Import Program									
6.1 Generate application form of exemption	Division of Communication,									
6.2 Publication of the List of Import and	Division of Communication,									

Preparation of the List of Imports, from coordination and research to drafting, revision, and final publication with the exemption application form.

Task	Personnel / Division	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W15	W16	W17	W18	W29	W30	W31	W42	W43	W44
8.1 Preliminary research for List of Prohibited	List of LAM Research																					
8.2 Draft 1 List of LAM based on Draft 1 List	List of LAM Research																					
9 Modification of List of LAM based on	List of LAM Research																					
10 Generate Guideline of LAM Operation and	List of LAM Research																					
11.1 Publication of combined List of LAM	NYSDAM Division of Food																					
11.2 Communication and Notification with	NYSDAM Division of Food																					
Pivoting Period																						
12.1 Training of LAM inspection	LAM Inspection Program																					
12.2 First inspection of LAM compliance.	LAM Inspection Program																					
12.3 Issue warning and fine. Feedback of	NYSDAM, Penalty and																					
12.4 Second inspection of LAM compliance.	LAM Inspection Program																					
Issue certificate and rectification note	Leader, LAM Inspector																					
12.5 Issue warning and fine. Feedback of	NYSDAM, Penalty and																					
12.6 Third inspection of LAM compliance.	LAM Inspection Program																					
12.7 Issue warning and fine. Feedback of	NYSDAM, Penalty and																					

Development and publication of the List of LAM, followed by a pivoting period for facilities to adjust, and several rounds of inspections and follow-up actions.

Task	Personnel / Division	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8
2.3 Reports on concerns of species and related	ZRAC Liaison								
3.1 First meeting on the List of Import	List of Import Program								
3.2 Send feedbacks and recommendations to	ZRAC Liaison, ZRAC								
4.1 Second meeting on the List of Import	List of Import Program								
4.2 Send feedbacks and recommendations to	ZRAC Liaison, ZRAC								
5.1 Final meeting on the List of Import	List of Import Program								
8.3 Meeting on List of LAM	List of LAM Research								
8.4 Send feedbacks and recommendations to	ZRAC Liaison (NYSDOH),								

Reports on species-related concerns and a series of meeting between the ZRAC Liaison and the List of Imports/LAM teams to exchange feedback and recommendations.

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