

Evidence-based investigation of SARS-CoV-2 proximal origin

16 May 2024 – 28th session

Commitment of the Participants

Do not divulge video/sound/picture recordings
to others outside of the workshop
(without explicit consent of the persons involved).

Do not record the talks without agreement of the speaker.

Do not record the discussions without agreement of all participants.

Do not divulge without agreement of the participants.

Do not take a public position involving the group of participants.



Scientific Committee

Guillaume Achaz, population geneticist, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle and Collège de France; Paris, France

Bruno Canard, molecular virologist, AFMB CNRS, Université Aix-Marseille, France

Etienne Decroly, molecular virologist, AFMB CNRS, Université Aix-Marseille, France

Jacques van Helden, bioinformatics, biostatistics, genome analysis, Aix-Marseille Université, Marseille, France

Organising Committee

Virginie Courtier-Orgogozo, evolutionary geneticist, Institut Jacques Monod, Université de Paris, France

François Graner, biophysicist, MSC CNRS, Université de Paris, France

José Halloy, biophysicist, LIED CNRS, Université de Paris, France

Participants

Specialists of diverse fields, all trying to elucidate the origins of SARS-CoV-2.

Goals of the Workshop

- (1) Elucidate the origins of SARS-CoV-2
- (2) Foster discussions and collaborations between researchers from various relevant fields (virology, modelling, bioinformatics, ecology, social sciences, etc.) working on the origin of SARS-CoV-2.
- (3) Have a general overview of the different types of evidence and approaches currently undertaken to investigate the origin of the virus.
- (4) Apply an evidence-based analysis to evaluate the different hypotheses about the origin of the virus.

Commitment of the Participants

Adopt an open attitude to alternative hypotheses.

Distinguish clearly facts from interpretations and opinions.

Focus on facts and scientific debate.

Avoid personal attacks (during and after the workshop).

Avoid self-interest biasing the participation.

Next sessions

Always 3rd Thursday, every 4 months
(Jan, May, Sept)
Usually 3-6pm Paris time

Next ones:

19 Sept 2024

16 Jan 2025

**For workshop questions
please email François and José**

*All my introduction slides are available online
<https://courtier.ijm.fr/news-covid-origin/>*



**Courtier-
Orgogozo Lab**

TEAMRESEARCHTEACHINGO

NEWS RELATED TO SARS-COV-2 ORIGIN

Here are the introduction slides presented at our international workshop entitled "*Evidence-based investigation of SARS-CoV-2 proximal origin*". They present key newspaper articles & scientific papers related to SARS-CoV-2 origin published over the years.

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2023

20 April 2023- 19 Jul 2023
Not available
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17 Jun-21 Jul 2022

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17 Jan 2024

The screenshot shows the GitHub interface for the repository 'jbloom / SARS2_28Dec2019_Genbank_submission'. The repository is public and has a README.md file selected. The commit message is 'fix typo in table' by user 'jbloom'. The README content is visible, showing the title 'Analysis of a SARS-CoV-2 sequence submitted to Genbank on Dec-28-2019' by Jesse D Bloom, with his affiliation and email address.

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main ▾ SARS2_28Dec2019_Genbank_submission / README.md

Go to

jbloom fix typo in table

Preview Code Blame 243 lines (195 loc) · 26.9 KB

Analysis of a SARS-CoV-2 sequence submitted to Genbank on Dec-28-2019

Jesse D Bloom

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center and Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Seattle, WA 98109

jbloom@fredhutch.org

“Sequence submitted to NCBI's Genbank database by the Institute of Pathogen Biology of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences.

The sequence is in Pango clade B and contains three single-nucleotide differences from the Wuhan-Hu-1 reference. ”

https://github.com/jbloom/SARS2_28Dec2019_Genbank_submission/blob/main/README.md

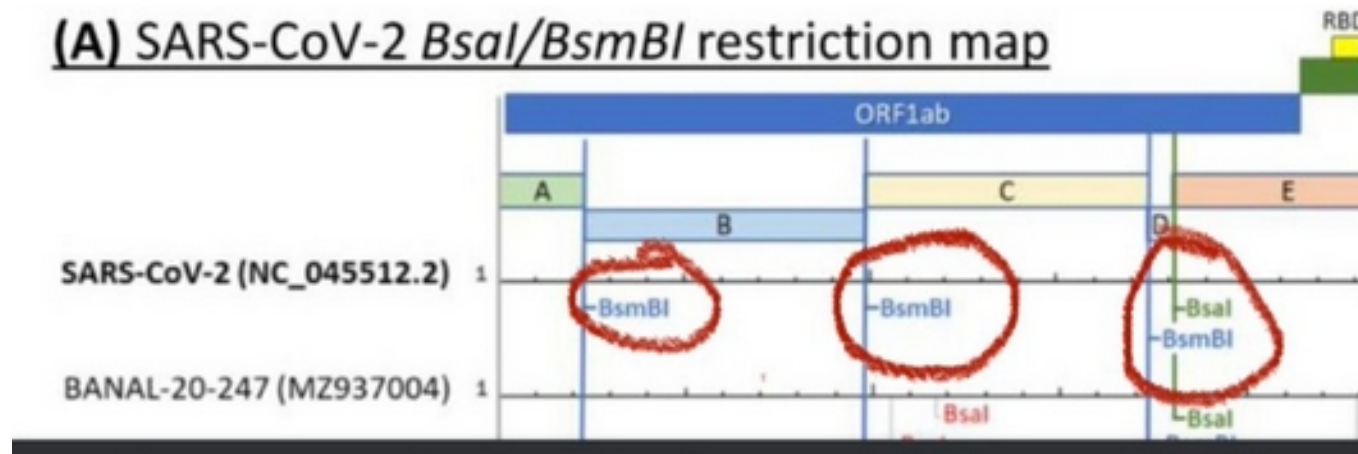
17 Jan 2024

DEFUSE complete drafts

FOIA by USRTK and @gumby4christ from the US Geological Survey

Plan to buy BsmBI restriction enzyme

(A) SARS-CoV-2 *Bsal*/*BsmBI* restriction map



.18.512756v1

18 Jan 2024

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COVID-19 ORIGINS

PESTICIDES

CHEMICA

US scientists proposed to make viruses with unique features of SARS-CoV-2 in Wuhan



Posted: January 18, 2024 by [Emily Kopp](#)

19 Jan 2024

How Edinburgh University stifled my investigation

Andrew Rambaut has questions to answer

COVID

JEREMY FARRAR

LAB-LEAK



Ian Birrell

JANUARY 19, 2024 7 MINS

“I requested [to Edinburgh University] Rambaut’s email discussions with Farrar, Fauci, Holmes and Danish evolutionary biologist Kristian Andersen in relation to that controversial Nature Medicine document.

It rebuffed my request in an eight-page letter from its legal chief. ”

<https://usrtk.org/covid-19-origins/scientists-proposed-making-viruses-with-unique-features-of-sars-cov-2-in-wuhan/>

22 Jan 2024

House Select Subcommittee hearing on the Coronavirus Pandemic on Capitol Hill

2 Nov 2023: Michael Lauer, deputy director for extramural research at the NIH

14 Nov 2024: Peter Daszak, president of EcoHealth Alliance

28 Nov 2023: Emily Erbelding, director of the Division of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)

29 Dec 2023: David Morens (Part 1), Senior Advisor to the Director at National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)

18 Jan 2024: David Morens (Part 2)

5 Jan 2024: Lawrence A. Tabak, Director of the National Institutes of Health 2021-2023

22 Jan 2024: Ralph Baric, coronavirus researcher at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

23 Jan 2024

PUBLIC

In Early 2020, A Chinese Source Trusted By FBI Said Covid Leaked From Wuhan Lab, Sources Say

FBI's entire 25-person Chinese intelligence squad knew of reliable human intelligence that SARS-CoV-2 Covid leaked from a lab



MICHAEL SHELLENBERGER AND ALEX GUTENTAG

JAN 23, 2024 • PAID

24 Jan 2024

Negligence by experts in the early response to COVID-19

Posted on [January 24, 2024](#)

By Hideki Kakeya.



At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, public health authorities failed to convey correct information on the newly emerging virus. On January 14, 2020 [the World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) [posted](#) on its official twitter (currently X) account “Preliminary investigations conducted by the Chinese authorities have found no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission of the novel #coronavirus (2019-nCoV) identified in #Wuhan,

25 Jan 2024



“The new [DEFUSE] drafts show the authors planned to synthesize eight to 16 strains of SARS-type bat viruses, selected for their likely ability to infect human cells. The goal was to use them to make a vaccine to immunize bats in regions that military troops might have to enter.

In a note found in the new documents, Daszak wrote, “If we win this contract, I do not propose that all of this work will necessarily be conducted by Ralph, but I do want to stress the US side of this proposal so that DARPA are comfortable with our team. Once we get the funds, we can then allocate who does what exact work, and I believe that a lot of these assays can be done in Wuhan.

The DEFUSE procedure was to assemble the viral genome from 6 DNA sections.”

2 Feb 2024

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The Origin and Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Expert Survey

Post Date
February 02, 2024

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Seth Baum

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<https://gcrinstitute.org/covid-origin/>

5 Feb 2024



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Track record

The challenge

Update 7 Mar 2024



Rootclaim analysis

PUBLISHED: MON, FEB 5, 2024

LAST UPDATE ON: THU, MAR 7, 2024

Did Covid-19 come from nature or from a lab?

MOST PROBABLE ANSWER (94%):

The pandemic emerged as a result of a virus that leaked from a lab in Wuhan.

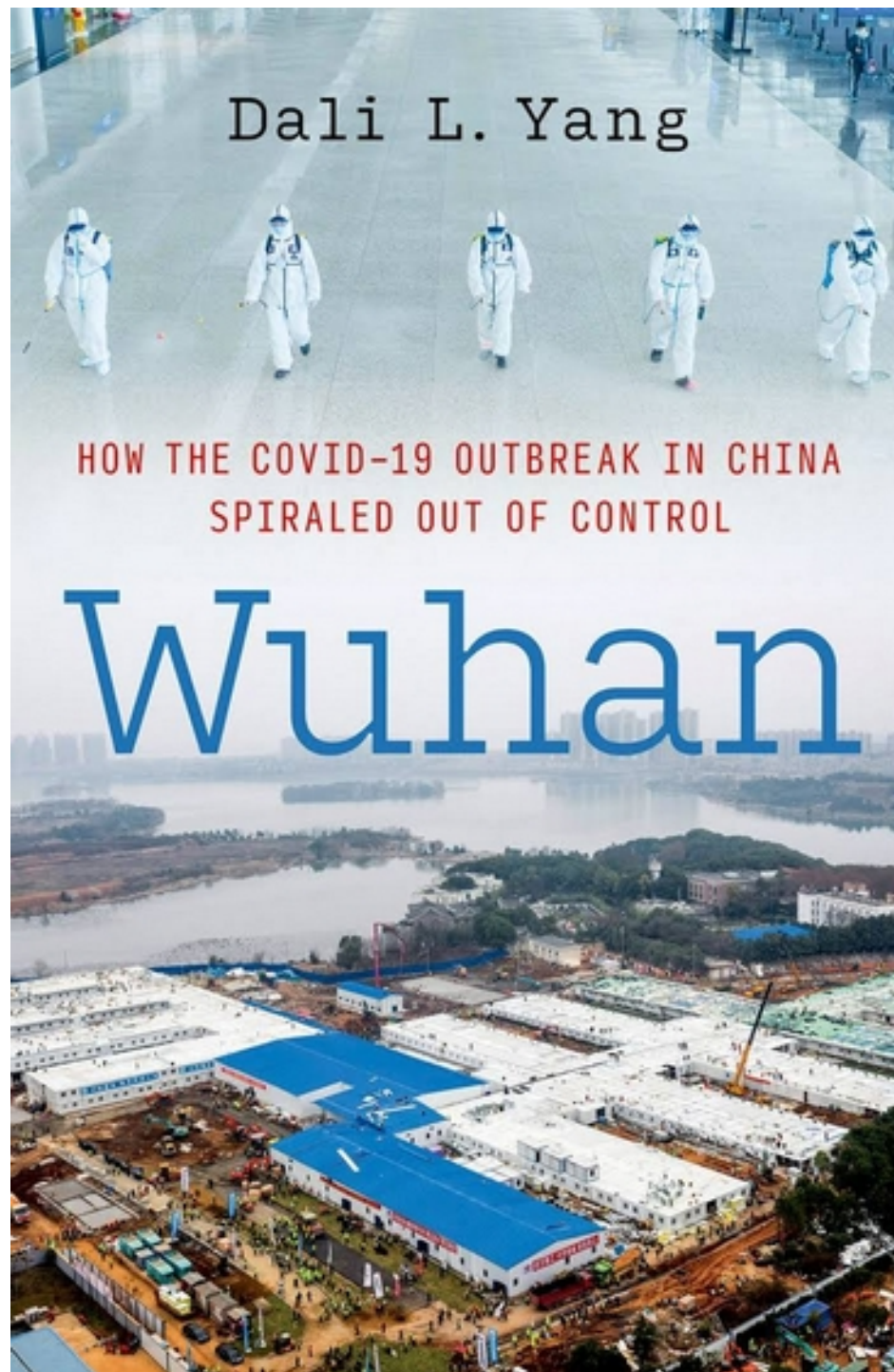


Peter Miller (@tgof137)
won the challenge.

<https://cards.rootclaim.com/analysis/65892f07d97bdb00199d4366>

<https://blog.rootclaim.com/rootclaims-covid-19-origins-debate-results/>

2 March 2024



Dali Yang, political scientist at the University of Chicago, leading authority on the Chinese political system


5 Mar 2024



Volume 10, Issue 1
2024
(In Progress)

JOURNAL ARTICLE

Evolutionary trajectory of diverse SARS-CoV-2 variants at the beginning of COVID-19 outbreak

Jia-Xin Lv, Xiang Liu, Yuan-Yuan Pei, Zhi-Gang Song, Xiao Chen, Shu-Jian Hu, Jia-Lei She, Yi Liu, Yan-Mei Chen, Yong-Zhen Zhang  [Author Notes](#)

Virus Evolution, Volume 10, Issue 1, 2024, veae020, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ve/veae020>

Published: 05 March 2024 **Article history** ▼

9 Mar 2024

COVID-19 e-print

Important: e-prints posted on arXiv are not peer-reviewed by arXiv; they should not be relied upon without context to guide clinical practice or health-related behavior and should not be reported in news media as established information without consulting multiple experts in the field.

[Submitted on 9 Mar 2024]

Confirmation of the centrality of the Huanan market among early COVID-19 cases

Florence Débarre, Michael Worobey

The centrality of Wuhan's Huanan market in maps of December 2019 COVID-19 case residential locations, established by Worobey et al. (2022a), has recently been challenged by Stoyan and Chiu (2024, SC2024). SC2024 proposed a statistical test based on the premise that the measure of central tendency (hereafter, "centre") of a sample of case locations must coincide with the exact point from which local transmission began. Here we show that this premise is erroneous. SC2024 put forward two alternative centres (centroid and mode) to the centre-point which was used by Worobey et al. for some analyses, and proposed a bootstrapping method, based on their premise, to test whether a particular location is consistent with it being the point source of transmission. We show that SC2024's concerns about the use of centre-points are inconsequential, and that use of centroids for these data is inadvisable. The mode is an appropriate, even optimal, choice as centre; however, contrary to SC2024's results, we demonstrate that with proper implementation of their methods, the mode falls at the entrance of a parking lot at the market itself, and the 95% confidence region around the mode includes the market. Thus, the market cannot be rejected as central even by SC2024's overly stringent statistical test. Our results directly contradict SC2024's and -- together with myriad additional lines of evidence overlooked by SC2024, including crucial epidemiological information -- point to the Huanan market as the early epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic.

15 Mar 2024

Risk Analysis

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

An Official Publication of the Society for Risk Analysis

ORIGINAL ARTICLE



Open Access



Use of a risk assessment tool to determine the origin of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)

Xin Chen , Fatema Kalyar, Abrar Ahmad Chughtai, Chandini Raina MacIntyre

First published: 15 March 2024 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/risa.14291>

16 Mar 2024



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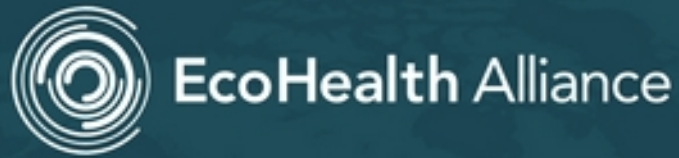
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Raina MacIntyre – Daring to ask about the origins of SARS-CoV-2

🕒 MARCH 16, 2024 📄 ADMIN 💬 ONE COMMENT

<https://biosafetynow.org/raina-macintyre-daring-to-ask-about-the-origins-of-sars-cov-2/>

12 April 2024



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EcoHealth Alliance Releases Emails that are the Subject of False Allegations in the Press

April 12, 2024 – There have been a series of recent news reports about emails between EcoHealth Alliance and

<https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/2024/04/ecohealth-alliance-releases-emails-that-are-the-subject-of-false-allegations-in-the-press>

17 April 2024

ANNUAL REVIEW OF VIROLOGY

Review Article | Free

The Emergence and Evolution of SARS-CoV-2

Edward C. Holmes¹

⊕ View Affiliations

Vol. 11 | <https://doi-org.insb.bib.cnrs.fr/10.1146/annurev-virology-093022-013037>

Review in Advance first posted online on April 17, 2024. (Changes may still occur before final publication.)

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“The available data clearly point to a natural zoonotic emergence within, or closely linked to, the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan. There is no direct evidence linking the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 to laboratory work conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. “

22 April 2024



Dake Kang and Maria Cheng

“The head of the China CDC Institute of Viral Disease was forced to retire over the release of the market data, according to a former China CDC official who declined to be named to speak on a sensitive topic.”

<https://apnews.com/article/china-covid-virus-origins-pandemic-lab-leak-bed5ab50dca8e318ab00f60b5911da0c>

30 April 2024



“Zhang Yongzhen wrote in an online post Monday that he and his team had been suddenly notified they were being evicted from their lab”

<https://usrtk.org/covid-19-origins/scientists-proposed-making-viruses-with-unique-features-of-sars-cov-2-in-wuhan/>

1 May 2024

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EXCLUSIVE

Ralph Baric, Whose Virology Techniques Were Used in Wuhan, Testified That Lab Leak Was Possible



“On January 22, he gave a six-hour interview to investigators from two Republican-led House committees: the Oversight and Accountability’s Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic, and Energy and Commerce’s Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.”

1 May 2024

POLITICS

Lawmakers, as part of ‘lab leak’ Covid inquiry, press to bar EcoHealth from federal research funds



By Sarah Oweremohle  May 1, 2024

Republicans, in particular, are [asking the administration](#) to immediately debar the research group EcoHealth Alliance, and to refer the case to law enforcement. Democrats, in a [separate report](#), did not go that far but said that documents and testimonies “raise reasonable questions” about the organization receiving any future taxpayer funding.

1 May 2024



Rep. Jim Jordan

@Jim_Jordan

...

On July 16, 2021, Mark Zuckerberg texted Sheryl Sandberg, Nick Clegg, and Joel Kaplan.

Three of the highest ranking executives at Facebook.

Could Facebook tell the world that “the [Biden] WH put pressure on us to censor the lab leak theory?”

From Mark Zuckerberg 07/16/2021 14:48:29; timestamp: [REDACTED]

CONFIDENTIAL TREATMENT REQUESTED -
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META-118HJC-0063522

Can we include that the WH put pressure on us to censor the lab leak theory?

White House

6 May 2024

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Structural basis for raccoon dog receptor recognition by SARS-CoV-2

Fu-Chun Hsueh , Ke Shi , Alise Mendoza, Fan Bu, Wei Zhang, Hideki Aihara , Fang Li 

Published: May 6, 2024 • <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.ppat.1012204>

Article

Authors

Metrics

Comments

Media Coverage



“Biochemical data showed that raccoon dog ACE2 is an effective receptor for SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, though not as effective as human ACE2. Structural comparisons highlighted differences in the virus-binding residues of raccoon dog ACE2 compared to human ACE2 (L24Q, Y34H, E38D, T82M, R353K), explaining their varied effectiveness as receptors for SARS-CoV-2.”

9 May 2024

Mr. Thorp goes to Washington

H. HOLDEN THORP [Authors Info & Affiliations](#)

SCIENCE • 9 May 2024 • Vol 384, Issue 6696 • p. 601 • DOI: 10.1126/science.adq2379

↓ 3770



PHOTO: CAMERON DAVIDSON

On 2 April, I received an email that changed the course of the next 2 weeks. The Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic, chaired by United States Congressman Brad Wenstrup, invited me to testify along with my counterparts at *Nature* and *The Lancet*. The purpose of the public hearing ([Academic Malpractice: Examining the Relationship Between Scientific Journals, the Government, and Peer Review](#)) was to determine whether government officials, specifically former National Institutes of Health lead-

12 May 2024

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The truth about Covid's origins is finally coming out

Under questioning from Congress, two key figures have unwittingly strengthened the lab-leak theory.

MATT RIDLEY

12th May 2024



COVID-19 e-print

Important: e-prints posted on arXiv are not peer-reviewed by arXiv; they should not be relied upon without context to guide clinical practice or health-related behavior and should not be reported in news media as established information without consulting multiple experts in the field.

[Submitted on 13 May 2024]

No evidence of systematic proximity ascertainment bias in early COVID-19 cases in Wuhan Reply to Weissman (2024)

Florence Débarre, Michael Worobey

In a short text published as Letter to the Editor of the Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series A, Weissman (2024) argues that the finding that early COVID-19 cases without an ascertained link to Wuhan's Huanan Seafood Wholesale market resided on average closer to the market than cases epidemiologically linked to it, reveals "major proximity ascertainment bias". Here we show that Weissman's conclusion is based on a flawed premise, and that there is no such "internal evidence" of major bias. The pattern can indeed be explained by places of infection not being limited to residential neighbourhoods, and by stochasticity -- i.e., without requiring any ascertainment bias.

15 May 2024

Today, based on evidence uncovered in @COVIDSelect's recent report, the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services commenced formal debarment proceedings against EcoHealth Alliance.**

EcoHealth will now face an immediate, government-wide suspension of taxpayer funds — including a hold on all active grants.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

Washington, D.C. 20201

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND CERTIFIED MAIL-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

EcoHealth Alliance, Inc.
Attn: Dr. Peter Daszak, President
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1200
New York, NY 10018-4183
Email: daszak@ecohealthalliance.org

Re: Notice of Suspension and Proposed Debarment of EcoHealth Alliance, Inc.

Dear Dr. Daszak:

This is to provide notification that, on behalf of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), I have suspended and proposed for debarment EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. (EHA) from participating in United States Federal Government procurement and nonprocurement programs. This action is initiated pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Part 180. HHS adopted and gave regulatory effect to 2 C.F.R. Part 180 at 2 C.F.R. Subpart 376.10. Copies of the referenced regulations are enclosed. Also enclosed is a copy of an Action Referral Memorandum (ARM), dated May 15, 2024, which sets forth the basis for the suspension and proposed debarment. The information in the ARM indicates that EHA lacks the present responsibility to participate in federal procurement and nonprocurement programs.

*All my introduction slides are available online
<https://courtier.ijm.fr/news-covid-origin/>*



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