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# Report of the WOAAH 5<sup>th</sup> Animal Welfare Global Forum: ‘Developing national animal welfare legislation; different paths for the same destination’

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WOAH, Paris



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## Introduction

The WOAAH Animal Welfare Global Forum is a key activity in WOAAH's Global Animal Welfare Strategy (GAWS). The forum provides an opportunity for information sharing and discussions on specific animal welfare topics, amongst experts from the WOAAH animal welfare community.

The 2023 Forum, 'Developing national animal welfare legislation; Different paths for the same destination', focused on presentations and discussions to bring knowledge, shared experience and support for the development of national animal welfare legislation. The topic was selected as this year's focus given that national veterinary legislation is the foundation for the implementation of WOAAH's international standards and for achieving good governance in animal health and welfare.

The Forum was held at WOAAH Headquarters in Paris from 2-3 November 2023 and was the first in-person forum since 2020. The Forum included presentations, both plenary and thematic, break-out groups and discussions.

Forty participants attended with representation from WOAAH Members and Collaborating Centres, NGOs, the private sector, industry, academia and research institutions. The programme of the Forum is presented in Annex 1.

## Summary of presentations

### Session 1: Setting the scene

The first session provided a welcome and scene setting for the Forum.

Dr Monique Eloit, WOAAH Director General, welcomed participants and emphasised the importance of the Forum as it provides an opportunity to bring together members of the WOAAH animal welfare community to discuss key topics with the objective of improving animal welfare worldwide. Dr Eloit emphasised that animal welfare must be addressed as a cross-cutting issue. Animal welfare is not an isolated technical question specific to the animal sector; it affects society more broadly, with implications for animal and human health, the economy, the environment and sustainable development.

Dr Eloit emphasised the importance of veterinary legislation as a foundation for the implementation of WOAAH International Standards. She highlighted WOAAH's capacity building work in veterinary legislation that support Members in the development and implementation of veterinary legislation. Dr Eloit emphasised that given the definitions of animal welfare are subject to interpretation, legislation is key to ensure a clear understanding of the objective to achieve adequate animal welfare at national, regional, and international levels. Dr Eloit emphasized that regulations must be realistic, enforceable, and adapted to each context.

Dr Leopoldo Stuardo, WOAAH Scientific Coordinator for Animal Welfare provided a summary of the Animal Welfare Global Strategy and its four strategic pillars and explained how activities of the Strategy have supported the selection of topics for the Animal Welfare Global Forum.

### **Animal Welfare Regulatory Framework – A Global Perspective**

Dr Caroline Maciel, International Trade Lawyer and Researcher, provided a comprehensive review of key terminology, features, and inter-country trends in animal protection legal frameworks worldwide. Dr Maciel emphasised the importance of understanding the differences in the use of terminology and the distinctions between animal cruelty, animal conservation, animal rights, and animal welfare and the different legal approaches needed to address each of these. She emphasised the necessity to have well-structured legal

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frameworks with a clear outline of objectives, implementation mechanisms, and substantive obligations that should be considered when implementing WOA standards for animal welfare.

Dr Maciel also referred to the inclusion of animal welfare in trade agreements at bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels, and discussed how these instruments are increasingly being interpreted and developed to foster international cooperation in the domain of animal welfare.

### **Veterinary legislation for the governance of the veterinary domain**

Dr David Sherman, WOA Senior programme coordinator, presented an overview of the importance of veterinary legislation for the governance of the veterinary domain and the links between veterinary legislation and animal welfare.

Dr Sherman provided an overview of the evolution of WOA Standards on veterinary legislation, including Chapter 3.4 Veterinary Legislation of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*. Dr Sherman informed participants about the WOA Veterinary Legislation Support Programme, which is an important part of the WOA Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway available to support WOA Members.

### **Session 2: Different pathways for animal welfare legislation**

The second session focused on animal welfare legislation in pig production systems and trade from the perspective of the Veterinary Service, industry and animal welfare non-governmental organisation.

#### **Implementing legislation for animal welfare pig production systems: the role of government.**

Dr Marie Shella Ordinario, National Animal Welfare Focal Point, Philippines, provided an overview of animal welfare legislation relevant to pig production systems in the Philippines. Dr Ordinario explained that the Philippines has the Republic Act 8485 which protects and promotes the welfare of aquatic and terrestrial animals and also has mechanisms to enforce this legislation. She also presented the Codes of Practice and minimum standards for the welfare of pigs, which ensure the welfare of pigs. She noted that implementation of these regulations brings economic benefits and enhances productivity.

#### **Implementing legislation for animal welfare pig production systems: the role of producers**

Mr Hsing Huang, Secretary General, International Meat Secretariat, focused on the role of producers in pig welfare and importantly the differences in standards in place between some countries, using examples of pig production in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Denmark. Mr Hsing Huang emphasised the need for practical and sustainable solutions for farmers to address animal welfare issues.

#### **Implementing legislation for animal welfare pig production systems: the role of an NGO**

Mr. Peter Stevenson, International Coalition for Animal Welfare (ICFAW), outlined ICFAW activities in Chinese Taipei, the Americas and South Africa, where the implementation of veterinary legislation was a critical part of the success of the capacity building activities to implement WOA standards in pig welfare.

#### **Animal welfare legislation in international trade**

Dr Miguel Peña, Agriculture and Livestock Services, Chile, described the development and implementation of animal welfare legislation in Chile, and the importance for an exporting country to include animal welfare legislation in bilateral trade agreements. Dr Peña highlighted the importance of economic and political change to improve welfare, rather than focusing solely on technical inputs to deliver change.

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## Session 3: National experiences of animal welfare legislation

The third session provided an opportunity for some WOAAH national Animal Welfare Focal Points to provide information about their respective veterinary legislative framework for the implementation of WOAAH Standards on animal welfare and the challenges and opportunities they experienced during the process of development and implementation.

### **Animal Welfare legislation in Colombia**

Dr Catalina Medrano, Colombia, presented the past, present and future of animal welfare in Colombia and highlighted that the main challenges to the development and implementation of animal welfare legislation included the diversity of animal production systems, a lack of awareness of the importance of animal welfare at the producer level, and cultural and economic (trade) context, and a lack of adequate knowledge within the Veterinary Services.

### **Animal welfare legislation in Tanzania**

Dr Annette Gabriel Kitambi, Tanzania, provided an overview of animal welfare legislation in Tanzania, and highlighted the importance of animals as livelihood assets, and the achievements that have been made to address animal welfare issues in Tanzania, including banning the trade of donkey hides, training of personnel, and the use of animal welfare inspectors.

### **Animal welfare legislation in Spain**

Dr Teresa Villalba, Spain, presented how Spain incorporates animal welfare obligations in its legislation on animal welfare to meet its obligations as a member of three international organisations: WOAAH, the Council of Europe and the European Union.

### **Animal welfare in the People's Republic of China**

Dr Xiao Xiao, People's Republic of China, presented the animal welfare legislation initiatives in the People's Republic of China, which are based on a four-level legal system of laws, regulations, rules and normative documents under the Constitution. He also explained the new standard system, which has been in development since 2016.

### **Investor's perspective on the development national animal welfare legislation**

Mrs Kateryna Onul, International Finance Corporation (IFC), presented the IFC Scan Guide which includes policy and regulatory dimensions of livestock production, including animal welfare, and explained how animal welfare standards and legislation are incorporated into IFC's approach to sustainable investments in livestock production. Through its investments IFC promotes best practice in animal health and welfare, as well as responsible use of antimicrobials and food safety, while looking for the opportunities to support governments to strengthen relevant regulations.

**You can download the PPT presentations of the different speakers by clicking on each of the presentations titles on the programme of the Forum presented on pages 6 and 7.**

## Working Group Sessions

### National animal welfare legislation: success stories, challenges and solutions

During this session participants worked in small groups focused on one of the following topics:

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- Legislation on animal welfare during transport
  - Legislation on animal welfare and production systems
  - Legislation on animal welfare during slaughter
  - Legislation on the use of animals in research and education

Each group was requested to focus its discussions on two phases with the following objectives:

Phase 1: identify the similarities and differences in animal welfare regulatory frameworks implemented among the countries represented; and

Phase 2: brainstorm strategies that could strengthen existing or future regulatory frameworks identified in phase 1, with the objective of sharing experiences and gathering a picture about the different approaches to legislation being taken.

Each group was facilitated by a WOAHA staff member and a rapporteur was nominated to report back to the plenary group.

### Feedback from Working Groups Sessions

Key findings of the four working groups are summarised below:

- countries represented recognised animal welfare in legislation, albeit to varying degrees; some had started designing an animal welfare strategy, while others are only just recognising animals as sentient beings.
- countries represented had a range of mechanisms to engage stakeholders in the development of legislation, including formal consultations and annual forums.
- implementation of WOAHA international standards for animal welfare varied amongst countries represented from low to high levels of harmonisation.
- pressure from consumers, NGOs and food manufacturers is helping to drive changes in attitudes about animal welfare and the need to develop legislation and implement standards for animal welfare. Economic factors in implementation remain one of the biggest challenges.
- communication with all stakeholders about the importance of animal welfare, WOAHA standards and implementation is of the utmost importance and communication about WOAHA standards can be difficult, particularly with small producers.
- countries represented had in place enforcement mechanisms for breaching animal welfare legislation such as fines, seizing of animals and relevant licences (affecting income and livelihoods) or prison sentences.
- some countries represented were offering incentives, such as grants, to improve animal welfare, noting that punishment is not an effective approach to create sustainable changes in behaviour.

### Closing remarks

Participants expressed their appreciation for the in-person event and agreed that the Forum provided an important opportunity to meet experts across the animal welfare sector and to share knowledge and experiences in developing and implementing animal welfare legislation that could be applied in their respective countries. Key observations included the need to agree on a common language and terms when developing legislation and regulations and the importance of monitoring and evaluating policies, alongside the need to consider how to influence human behaviour in order to improve animal welfare. The complex relationship between sustainability and animal welfare featured in discussions throughout the Forum.

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Some participants noted the potential for policymaking to be more creative and less prescriptive, which may make policies easier to enforce.

Participants agreed that collaboration amongst WOAAH Members was important and that those more advanced in the development and implementation of legislation could support those less advanced, and share lessons learned. All agreed that it was important to identify the standards most relevant to a Member and to prioritise the development and implementation of these regulations, noting that it can be a slow process. All agreed with a statement offered by a participant that improvements in animal welfare globally ‘can only move as quickly as our slowest Member,’ and therefore we must support these Members through WOAAH capacity building tools such as the WOAAH PVS Pathway and Veterinary Legislation Support Programme, as well as through the support of WOAAH Collaborating Centres for animal welfare or bilateral support.

Dr Stuardo noted that Headquarters will reflect on the discussions and points raised during the Forum as WOAAH continues to work to implement the Global Animal Welfare Strategy and that WOAAH will continue to explore how to support Members in the development and implementation of veterinary legislation in animal welfare beyond the PVS Pathway, for example during fora such as national Animal Welfare Focal Point workshops and other Strategy activities.

On behalf of Dr Eloit, Dr Gillian Mylrea, Head Standards Department, WOAAH Headquarters, thanked all those in attendance and closed the Forum.

## Annex 1

### Programme

WOAH Animal Welfare Global Forum ‘Developing national animal welfare legislation; different paths for the same destination’ WOAH Headquarters– Paris (France) 2–3 November 2023	
Day 1: 2 November 2023	
08h30–09h00	Registration and Tea/Coffee
09h00–09h30	‘Welcome & getting to know who is here’
Session 1: Setting the scene Chair: Montserrat Arroyo, Deputy Director General "International Standards and Science", WOAH	
Time	Theme/speaker
09h30–09h40	Opening remarks Monique Eloit, Director General, WOAH
09h40–09h50	<a href="#">The WOAH Global Animal Welfare Forum</a> Leopoldo Stuardo, Scientific Coordinator – Animal Welfare, WOAH
09h50–10h30	<a href="#">Animal welfare regulatory framework – a global perspective</a> Carolina Maciel, Ph.D in International Law & Policy from Wageningen University, Harvard University.
10h30–10h50	<a href="#">Veterinary legislation for the governance of the veterinary domain</a> David Sherman, Senior Programme Coordinator, WOAH
10h50–11h00	Morning Break Tea / Coffee
Session 2: Different pathways for animal welfare legislation Chair: Montserrat Arroyo	
11h00–11h20	<a href="#">Implementing legislation for animal welfare pig production systems: the role of government</a> Marie Shella Ordinario, National Animal Welfare Focal Point, The Philippines
11h20–11h40	<a href="#">Implementing legislation for animal welfare pig production systems: the role of producers</a> Hsin Huang, Secretary General, International Meat Secretariat (IMS)
11h40–12h00	<a href="#">Implementing legislation for animal welfare pig production systems: the role of an NGO</a> Peter Stevenson, International Coalition for Animal Welfare (ICFAW), Compassion in World Farming.
12h00–12h20	<a href="#">Animal welfare legislation in international trade</a> Miguel Peña, Head of Cross-Cutting Projects Department, Agriculture and Livestock Service (SAG), Chile
12h20–13h00	Panel discussion and Q&A
13h00–14h00	Lunch
Session 3 – National experiences of animal welfare legislation Chair: Montserrat Arroyo	
Time	Theme/speaker
14h00–14h15	<a href="#">Animal welfare legislation in Colombia</a> Catalina Medrano, Colombia
14h15–14h30	<a href="#">Animal welfare legislation in Tanzania</a> Annette Gabriel Kitambi, National Animal Welfare Focal Point, Tanzania
14h30–14h45	<a href="#">Animal welfare legislation in Spain</a> Teresa Villalba, National Animal Welfare Focal Point, Spain
14h45–15h00	<a href="#">Animal welfare legislation in the People's Republic of China</a> Xiao Xiao, National Animal Welfare Focal Point, People's Republic of China
15h15–15h45	Panel discussion and Q&A

15h45–16h15	Afternoon Break Tea/Coffee
Working Group Sessions –National animal welfare legislation: success stories, challenges and solutions	
Time	Theme
16h15–18h00	Group 1: Legislation on animal welfare during transport
	Group 2: Legislation on animal welfare and production systems
	Group 3: Legislation on animal welfare during slaughter
	Group 4: Legislation on the use of Animals in research and education
18h00–19h30	Welcome cocktail

Day 2: 3 November 2023	
Session 4 – Presentation of Working Group Sessions Chair: Leopoldo Stuardo	
Time	Theme/speaker
09h00–10h00	Feedback from the Working Groups
10h00–11h15	Panel discussion and Q&A
11h15–11h30	Morning Break Tea/Coffee
Closing Session Chair: Gillian Mylrea, Head, Standards Department, WOAHO Headquarters	
Time	Theme
11h30-11h50	<a href="#">Investor’s perspective on the development national animal welfare legislation</a> Kateryna Onul, Policy and Regulatory Lead, Agribusiness Advisory, International Finance Corporation, part of the World Bank.
11h50–12h30	<a href="#">Summary of key themes emerging from discussions</a>
12h30–12h50	Closing discussion
12h50–13h00	Closing

Click in the Title of the presentation to download the PPT.