

## **Implementing OIE animal welfare standards through a National Animal Welfare Strategy, the Malaysian case**

Quaza Nizamuddin Bin Hassan Nizam

Department of Veterinary Services Malaysia, Ministry of Agriculture and AgroBased Industry.

Email: [quaza@dvs.gov.my](mailto:quaza@dvs.gov.my)

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Malaysia has set its vision to be a developed nation by 2020. In line with this aspiration, a caring society is envisaged with concerns for animal welfare. Hence the National Animal Welfare Strategy was prepared to encompass the changes which need to be put in place from 2012 to 2020.

The strategy was developed through exhaustive consultation with government agencies, universities, associations and non-governmental organisations to form a comprehensive document which addresses the various aspects of animal welfare. The mission is to implement international animal welfare standards, reinforced by universal values. Three major strategic approaches have been adopted, which is to strengthen the governance of animal welfare, empowering and harnessing the involvement of stakeholders and leading the *ihsan* concept in the international arena. The plan was structured into three phases which include the development, standardization and stabilisation phase.

The various strategies adopted had resulted in the desired outputs being achieved. The Animal Welfare Act was prepared and underwent public consultation, tabled and passed in the parliament and the Act was legislated on 29 December 2015. Meanwhile ten regulations are in the process of being finalised to be legislated and the full implementation of the Act is expected in the middle of 2017. To complement the regulations, ten Codes of Practice have been developed. The Department of Veterinary Services has restructured its organisation to expand the manpower required to manage animal welfare. The universities have introduced animal welfare subjects while there are already efforts underway to introduce animal welfare at preschool, primary and secondary schools. Training programmes were introduced for people handling animals. In addition there is an ongoing public awareness campaign to promote animal welfare. The Center of Excellence has been established to carry out various research works on animal welfare issues especially from the Islamic perspective. The Department has adopted and adapted the chapter on transport of animals by land, air and sea from OIE standards. In addition standards for slaughter of animals, stray dog population control and use of animals for research and education have also been incorporated for this purpose.

Keywords: Malaysia – National animal welfare strategy – OIE animal welfare standards.