

## 30th Conference of the WOAHA Regional Commission for Europe

Catania, Italy, 3 to 7 October 2022

Final

### Recommendation No. 1

#### **Long distance transport of live animals: WOAHA standards and best practices including societal perception and communication aspects**

##### CONSIDERING THAT:

1. One of the core objectives of WOAHA is to develop international standards for the facilitation of international safe trade, the prevention and control of animal diseases, including zoonoses, and the promotion of animal health and animal welfare;
2. WOAHA global animal welfare strategy provides continuing direction and coordination of the Organisation's actions in the animal welfare area, through the development of animal welfare standards, capacity building and education, communication with governments, organisations and the general public, as well as support for the implementation of animal welfare standards and policies;
3. The Second Global Animal Welfare Forum (April 2019, Paris) has highlighted the need to establish a sense of collective responsibility amongst all participants in the transportation chain of animals, as well as clearly identified individual responsibility at every point of the chain and mechanisms to transfer that responsibility between transportation chain participants; the role of effective communication and coordination among those responsible for reducing the risk of animal welfare failures, the need to develop regulatory frameworks and practices to ensure a strong buy-in from all stakeholders and a commitment to practical implementation, and the importance of having a multidisciplinary approach when developing animal welfare policies including scientific basis, technological progress and socio-economic aspects;
4. There is a growing and strong interest expressed by the civil society towards animal welfare issues during transport and society's increased perception on this matter impacts on consumer choices;
5. The Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe has identified as one of the priority topics of the Action Plans, the application of WOAHA Animal Welfare Standards during transport, and is consistently supporting Veterinary Services in implementing those standards;

And considering that, based on the response to the questionnaire provided to the Delegates of the Regional Commission for Europe in preparation of this technical item:

6. The vast majority of the responding Members have a legal basis for the implementation of animal welfare during transport and the legislation generally, but not always completely, reflects WOAHA Standards on animal welfare;
7. Awareness campaigns among stakeholders involved in animal welfare issues and capacity building activities are relevant tools for promoting the implementation of animal welfare standards for transport at country and regional levels;
8. Insufficient financial resources and lack of trained personnel are the main factors adversely affecting the ability of Competent Authorities to implement standards and requirements on animal transport control.

## THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

### RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Members develop or update where necessary, legislation that establishes a legal basis for complying with WOAAH standards for animal welfare during transport, including the supporting regulations and procedures for assessing the fitness to travel of the animals for the journey;
2. Members develop procedures and guidelines that clearly define the individual players and their responsibilities, including training needs, along the animal transportation chain (departure, transit, arrival). These also clearly define the mechanisms to transfer the responsibilities between the different players, and the required competencies to be demonstrated to facilitate the enforcement of legislation and standards for the protection of the transported animals;
3. Members develop procedures for communication between *Competent Authorities* including pre notification of shipment and report back to the sender on significant animal welfare problems which occurred during the journey.
4. WOAAH provide targeted capacity building for Members aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the controls, the evaluation and monitoring procedures for the verification of compliance of the official control systems carried out by the *Competent Authorities* and also directly to the key players involved in the transport of animals;
5. Members promote the inclusion of animal welfare courses and welfare-related training in the veterinary school curricula;
6. Members continue collaboration at the regional level, with the involvement of WOAAH Regional and Sub-regional Representations to support the development and implementation of strategies to address regional needs and priorities on animal welfare during transport;
7. WOAAH advocates and build awareness on the role and responsibilities of the Veterinary Services, including public and private sector veterinarians in the monitoring and enforcement of animal welfare standards, and increasing awareness among stakeholders for the effective implementation of WOAAH standards and recommendations on animal welfare during transport;
8. WOAAH provides appropriate technical support to Members through the revision and development of standards and recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* where needed taking into account scientific knowledge and technological progress.
9. WOAAH provides relevant tools for the (i) implementation of the WOAAH standards; (ii) development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of veterinary legislation; (iii) operation of the network of National Contact Points on long distance transport and (iv) good governance of Veterinary Services.
10. WOAAH works closely with regional and international organisations, and donors committed to animal welfare to collaborate and support the *Competent Authorities* and their partners to implement the WOAAH standards on animal welfare during transport from place of departure until final destination; and
11. WOAAH collaborates and forms partnerships with organisations representing relevant private sector stakeholders to implement WOAAH animal welfare standards as the key reference for national, regional and international transport. WOAAH urge the private sector to adopt private standards that are consistent with the WOAAH standards, to ensure the standards on welfare of animals intended for transport are applied consistently globally.