



# 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of WOAHA regional network of National Contact Points on long-distance transportation in Europe

9 July 2024

Teleconference

## Meeting Report

### Summary

The 4th meeting of the WOAHA network of National Contact Points (NCPT) on long-distance transportation in Europe was held 9 July 2024 as an online event. The meeting was attended by 42 National Contact Points.

The meeting provided the opportunity to recall the objectives and terms of references for NCPT, present the state of play of the network, discuss network's functioning and its future activities. Some of the key topics delivered updates on WOAHA global activities on transport, European Union legislative proposals on transport of animals, and the last developments on relevant regional activities such as the multiregional Whole Journey Scenario workshop.

The next meeting of the network is planned to be held in March 2025 in Greece.

### 1. Introduction

The 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the WOAHA network of National Contact Points on long-distance transportation in Europe (NCPT) was held 9 July 2024 as an online event. 42 National Contact Points within a total of 50 participants attended the meeting. The main objective was to maintain the engagement of the contact points, discuss common issues and provide information on recent global and regional activities.

### 2. Session 1: State of play

#### 2.1. Introduction and state of play of the network ([Link to view presentation](#))

The Terms of Reference of the National Contact Point on Long-Distance Transportation (NCPT) ([link](#)) were adopted by the Regional Commission for Europe in November 2022 with general objective of establishing operational communication links within the network to facilitate the exchange of the relevant information and addressing issues with long-distance and cross border transport of animals in the region. Currently 50 out of 53 WOAHA Europe Members have nominated their NCPT (plus one confirmation of no relevance for nomination). The last network meeting was held in June 2023 in Dublin, Ireland, and was the network's first meeting in face-to-face mode. The meeting allowed all participants to meet each other, establish direct contact, share experiences, and discuss common challenges.

#### 2.2. WOAHA global activities on transport ([Link to view presentation](#))

Leopoldo Stuardo (WOAHA standards Department) presented a summary of the relevant animal welfare activities organised at the WOAHA HQ and the implementation of the WOAHA Animal Welfare Global Strategy. The Code Commission work initiated the revision of the animal transport chapters of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code. The established ad hoc group of experts held two meetings to revise Chapters 7.2. and 7.3. on transport of animals by sea and land. In addition there are already preliminary discussions with IATA on revision Chapter 7.4. Transport of animals by air.

The Global Animal Welfare Forum, held in 2019, highlighted the need to establish a collective responsibility framework across the transportation chain. It emphasized the role of effective communication and coordination and advocated for regulatory frameworks with strong stakeholder engagement and a multidisciplinary approach to policy development.

The WOAHA Observatory's thematic study on "Animal welfare during transport by land and sea: level of implementation of WOAHA standards and challenges faced" recently completed its 1st phase, which consisted of a worldwide survey. The 2nd phase, which will help better understand the survey's findings, will follow up with focus groups/interviews with samples of Members. The preliminary results of the study were presented ([factsheet](#)).

### **2.3. EU activities on transport** ([Link to view presentation](#))

Stanislav Ralchev (European Commission DG SANTE - G3) presented the main aspects of the legislative proposal on transport. The proposal is a start of a process of regulation revision that will take still several years, after which transitional periods are foreseen for actors impacted to adapt. Presentation highlighted the new provisions introduced in related to exports from the EU and highlighted that for imports, and foreseen equivalent requirements to the updated EU rules.

## **3. Session 2: Platform activities on transport**

### **3.1. Multi-regional Whole Journey Scenario Workshop between Europe, the Middle East and North Africa** ([Link to view presentation](#))

The multiregional Whole Journey Scenario (WJS) workshop on long distance transport (land and sea) between Europe, North Africa and the Middle East was held in Tunis in November 2023. The workshop was organised as a follow-up to the previous workshop held in Egypt in 2022. 15 WOAHA Members participate in the workshop for a total of 44 participants. The participant feedback confirms that the multiregional whole journey scenario workshops are instrumental in improving multiregional collaboration between competent authorities. The following main points were highlighted during the WJS workshop: a need for strengthening communication and collaboration between Competent Authorities, the importance of defining responsibilities and the importance of appropriate journey planning and emergency procedures. ([more information](#))

[Link to the video](#) with meeting's highlights.

### **3.2. 4<sup>th</sup> Action Plan of the Platform for Animal Welfare for Europe (2024-2026)** ([Link to view presentation](#))

The 4th Action Plan covering the period 2024-2026 was adopted by the Regional Commission for Europe in May 2024 during the 91st General Session. The 4th Action Plan has been developed by considering the needs identified by WOAHA Members of the Regional Commission for Europe, the outcomes of and lessons learnt from the implementation of the initiatives and the results of the external evaluation. It ensures continuity with the three previous Action Plans, and it focuses on strengthening the WOAHA Members' involvement in the development of standards and the regional collaboration towards its implementation. The 4th Action Plan retains five previous priority topics: transport of animals by land and by sea, slaughter of animals, dog population management, welfare of working equids and welfare of animals during natural disasters.

The planned activities on the welfare of animals during transport on land and sea focus on three main areas: the network of National Contact Points on long distance transportation in Europe with annual meetings, series Whole Journey Scenario (WJS) workshops and the development of self-assessment and monitoring tool. The self-assessment and monitoring tool for evaluating the level of implementation of WOAHA standards in transport will aim to measure the implementation of the standards and help us assess the impact of the activities.

## **4. Network activities** ([Link to view presentation](#))

The network's main objective is to establish operational communication links within the network to facilitate the exchange of relevant information. Through the poll confirming the relevance of the network,

18% participants indicated that they contacted another contact point only once, 21% two to three times and 29% more than three times over the last 12 months. In addition, 56% of participants indicated that those exchanges were very helpful, and 14% at least somehow helpful.

Still, there are reported requests that did not receive a replay. The issue of multiple contacts that didn't lead to a reply from a contact point was highlighted by Germany. The following discussion recalled the objective of the network to share information, including occasions that might be difficult to respond to and the possibility of including delegates as national focal points. In addition, WOAAH can support contact points if needed. The next in-person meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss those challenges further.

A quarterly update by WOAAH was indicated as the most preferable frequency by participants. WOAAH invites all members to share any relevant information that could be disseminated within the network through those quarterly updates.

The work on the common reporting document was initiated by a small task group of volunteer contact points. A discussion on the draft document at the next in-person meeting will be organized.

The next Whole Journey Scenario workshop for Europe is scheduled for November 2024, and the specific route to be addressed still needs to be defined.

## **5. Main conclusions**

Based on the discussion and feedback collected from participants during the meeting, we can conclude that the regional network of National Contact Points on long-distance transportation in Europe has been successfully established. The latter facilitates the exchange of information and helps to solve difficulties, such as issues arising with long-distance and cross-border transport of animals in Europe.

The next meeting of the WOAAH regional network of National Contact Points on long-distance transportation in Europe is planned for 11 – 13 March 2025 in Greece (tbc).

## **List of annexes**

*Annex 1 – Meeting Agenda*

## 4th meeting of WOAHA regional network of National Contact Points on long-distance transportation in Europe

9 July 2024 (teleconference)  
10:00 – 12:00

### AGENDA

Time	Topics	Speakers
9:45	Opening of the zoom platform and connection checks	
10:00	Welcome and opening remarks	Estelle Hamelin (WOAH SRR in Brussels)
Session 1: State of play		
10'	Introduction and state of play of the network	Tomasz Grudnik (WOAH SRR Office in Brussels)
20'	WOAH global activities on transport	Leopoldo Stuardo (WOAH HQ)
15'	EU activities on transport	Stanislav Ralchev (European Commission - DG SANTE)
Session 2: Platform activities on transport		
10'	Multi-regional Whole Journey Scenario Workshop between Europe, the Middle East and North Africa	T. Grudnik
10'	4 <sup>th</sup> Action Plan (2024-2026)	T. Grudnik
Session 3: Network activities		
40'	Planned activities and network communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- common documents discussion</li> <li>- engagement plan</li> <li>- communication between NCPT</li> <li>- WJS workshop for Europe</li> <li>- next meeting of the network</li> </ul>	Tomasz Grudnik  Polls and discussion
5'	Main conclusion and closing remarks	E. Hamelin
12:00	End of the meeting	