



World Organisation
for Animal Health
Founded as OIE

Regional training seminar for WOA National Focal Points on Animal Welfare – Europe



Funded by
the European Union



and

Event on Welfare of Working Equids



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Madrid - Spain

Meeting Report

Summary

The regional training seminar for WOA National Focal Points on Animal Welfare for Europe was held in Madrid, Spain 25-27 June 2024.

The meeting brought together 60 participants, including 42 National Focal Points on animal welfare. This workshop aimed to provide the latest updates from WOA on the implementation of the Global Animal Welfare Strategy and regional Platform on animal welfare for Europe, whilst providing knowledge on developments in animal welfare and implementation of animal welfare standards.

Technical session lectures covered animal welfare legislation, advancing implementation of standards and holistic approaches and economic aspects of animal welfare. Additionally, participants were presented with knowledge on assessment of animal welfare in production systems, fish welfare, and animal welfare indicators at slaughterhouses.

The program included also working group exercise on public private partnership for support an implementation of animal welfare standards and a field visit to a dairy goat farm.

The final day focused on the five priority topics of the regional Platform on animal welfare: disasters management, transport of animals, welfare during slaughter, dog population management and welfare of working equids.

The meeting provided an excellent opportunity to reinforce focal point's engagement and networking through experience-sharing and discussion between participants.

WOAH is very grateful to the European Union for funding the meeting and to the Kingdom of Spain for kindly supporting in the organisation and hosting this event.

In addition, with support provided by the International Coalition for Working Equids, a back-to-back event dedicated to the welfare of working equids was held 27th June. This event gave opportunities for additional countries' experiences exchange and group exercises work to improve the welfare of working equids.

1. Introduction

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) developed a global capacity-building programme aiming to support WOAH Delegates and National Focal Points (NFP) in providing good governance for improving animal health and animal welfare at the national level. WOAH National Focal Points, nominated by Delegates and acting under their supervision, are an important mechanism for countries to satisfy their obligations and strengthen communication and collaboration between Members and WOAH.

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The overall objective of the seminar is to build the capacity of NFPs on animal welfare so that they can better assume their responsibilities and obligations as advisors to the WOAH Delegate in their respective countries. This seminar provided participants with knowledge of the obligations, commitments, and responsibilities of the NFP, the standard-setting process, and the implementation of the WOAH standards.

The seminar provides the participants with information on their role within the WOAH Global Animal Welfare Strategy and the Regional Animal Welfare Platform for Europe, the opportunities and challenges they may face. The NFP on animal welfare were consulted on specific technical topics to be addressed during the seminar through a poll during a thematic webinar on 13 December 2023 and a dedicated online survey. They initially identified the following additional technical topics to be addressed during the workshop: animal welfare in production systems (pig, dairy cows, poultry), welfare of farmed fish, working equines and horizontal issues such as training, education and workforce development, economic of animal welfare, communication, awareness raising and engagement of veterinary authorities with stakeholders. A field visit was organized to a farm of goats for diary production. This seminar also allows experience-sharing and discussion between country representatives and stakeholders.

Previous seminars for animal welfare focal points were held in Ukraine (2012) (only for East European countries); Italy (2013), Georgia (2015), Moldova (2017), and in the Netherlands (2019).

In addition, the dedicated half day event on the welfare of working equids for 20 targeted¹ WOAH members is held back-to-back to the NFP workshop organised with financial support from International Coalition for Working Equids (ICWE).

2. Session 1: Opening

Dr Valentin Almansa, WOAH's Spain delegate, opened the seminar reminding to all the importance of working to better animal welfare in Europe but also that the Europe region needs to consider the work done on animal welfare with a broader scope in mind, taking into consideration the global perspective and other countries' approaches.

2.1. Introduction, objectives of the workshop and ToRs of the Focal Points on animal welfare (AW FP) ([Link to view presentation](#))

The objectives of the training and the ToRs of the network of Focal Points on animal welfare were presented with in mind its possible revision. The presentation focused on the standard setting process and the role of AW FP in this process. The revision of the ToRs will need to include the role of the AW FP in the standards setting as well as implementation process.

¹ ALBANIA, ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, BULGARIA, NORTH MACEDONIA, GEORGIA, GREECE, ISRAEL, KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZSTAN, MOLDOVA, MONTENEGRO, TÜRKIYE, ROMANIA, SERBIA, SPAIN, TAJIKISTA, TURKMENISTAN, UZBEKISTAN

2.2. Icebreaker exercise

The objective of the icebreaker exercise was to promote exchanges between participants on the role and their experience as the AW FP and what they expect from WOAAH. Participants were encouraged to mix in between groups of different years of experience as an AW FP.

The exercise led to interesting discussions on how WOAAH could support the AW FP in their daily work through different initiatives:

- Create a network of contact points on two other priority topics (dog population management and natural disaster management) that would be helpful to facilitate contact in between countries when an issue on those topics arise. Considering the creation of those networks needs the full implication from the AW FP (identify and nominate the contact point in agreement with the delegate, participating in the development of ToRs, ...) and of WOAAH Brussels office staff, further discussions are needed to define the exact need and means available to establish and maintain those networks.
- Create sub-regional network to support countries to ensure continuity in their work through time. Support in building multi-annual AW Action Plan could be explored.
- Create an online platform to allow the AW FP to exchange their experience and encourage the exchange of experience through short meeting. An online platform is a resources demanding tool to develop and maintain but an alternative proposal could to be to create an online e-depository where AW FP could share their experiences. We could also dedicate a part of the quarterly newsletter to the AW FP updates and of course, meetings can be organized around a specific thematic. For this sharing experience activity to be a success we can only encourage AW FP to share with WOAAH Brussels (rsr.bruxelles@woah.org) their experiences and from there we will organize the different activities.

2.3. WOAAH animal welfare working program and Global Animal Welfare Strategy ([Link to view presentation](#))

Leopoldo Stuardo presented a summary of the animal welfare activities organised at the WOAAH HQ and the implementation of the WOAAH Animal Welfare Global Strategy. Under the pillar of the development of AW standards he presented the chapter 7.5. that was adopted at the last General Session with a new title 'Animal welfare during slaughter' and also the related definitions. In addition, there are two chapters on animal welfare for submitted for comments: the chapter on killing for disease control and the introductory chapter for Section 7. on Animal welfare of the *Terrestrial Code*. The Code Commission work plan includes the revision of the animal transport chapters. Under the pillar on Communication he presented the outcomes of the past AW Global Fora, The upcoming AW Global Forum will take place in Merida, Mexico on the 28-29 October 2024 and it will focus on "How WOAAH Global Animal Welfare Collaborating Centre Network can support Members in the development of animal welfare policies". The pillar of capacity building and education covers the ongoing development of e-learning modules on killing of reptiles and labelling process. For the last pillar on implementation of AW standards and policies he reminded the important of Regional Animal Welfare Strategies (RAWS), the ongoing observatory thematic study on transport, the ISO Technical Specification on AW.

2.4. WOAAH Platform update ([Link to view presentation](#))

The AW Platform for Europe was launch in 2013, and now are in the implementation of the 4th Action Plan (2024-2026) that has been officially adopted by the Regional Commission for Europe at their last meeting in Paris, during WOAAH General Session. This 4th Action Plan keep the focus on the same 5 priority topics. The governance was also renewed during the Regional Commission for Europe with 2 new Members: Azerbaijan, and Bosnia and Herzegovina; 3 Members that had their mandate renewed: Ireland, Israel and Portugal. The Platform also launch 2 calls to help develop an improve Monitoring and Evaluation system and a better communication strategy.

Tom Kenis, the consultant on communication was present during the AW FP seminar, giving him the opportunity to meet with the participants to help identify their expectations for the Platform communication activities.

3. Session 2: Animal welfare legislation

3.1. Dissecting Animal Law: identifying differences in scope, structure, language, and institutional usages ([Link to view presentation](#))

Dr. Carolina Maciel, an International Trade Lawyer and Researcher, provided a comprehensive overview of various types of laws aimed at protecting animals. Using examples from different countries, she illustrated differences in legislating to prevent animal cruelty, ensure animal conservation, recognize animal rights, and promote animal welfare. Dr. Maciel also explored distinctions between branches of law, particularly criminal and administrative law, and emphasized the importance of consistent terminology usage and meaningful variation when writing or reading legislation. Additionally, she brought examples of how the animal welfare standards elaborated by the WOAAH are being used by other international organizations and national governments.

Discussion:

- In response to a participant's question about whether the lack of explicit reference to animal protection in a country's Constitution hinders legal development in animal welfare, Dr Maciel explained that while laws and regulations must follow each country's legal procedures and hierarchy, the absence of such references in the Constitution does not justify neglecting animal welfare. This commitment may be reflected in federal or state legislation or included in broader policies such as animal health and food safety.
- In response to a participant's question about whether it is legally accurate to say that animals have rights, Dr Maciel explained that in some jurisdictions, animals have been recognized as having rights, either through legislative acts or judicial decisions. She also clarified that the legal concept of personhood can apply to biological persons (humans) as well as to other entities such as corporations, ships, and certain other legal subjects.

3.2. Developing animal welfare regulation ([Link to view presentation](#))

Stanislav Ralchev from the European Commission presented the process to develop an EU legislation on animal welfare. The first EU legislation on the protection of animals at the time of killing was adopted in the 70s. Nowadays, under the Farm to Fork Strategy the European Commission started a revision of the current EU animal welfare acquis with the aim to align it with the latest scientific evidence and to make the current food production chain more sustainable. The process began with an evaluation of the existing legislation, continued with an inception impact assessment, wide public consultation, stakeholders events, an impact assessment supported by external studies per specific topic and it was concluded with an adoption of Commission Staff Working document summarising the findings and with an adoption of two proposals of the Commission on the protection of animals during transport and the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability. This process has been also supported by the publication of several new scientific opinions of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), by 6 sub-groups of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare and by Joint and Research Centre (IRC) economic modelling. While both proposals are now at the level of the co-legislators which are the Council of the EU and the EU Parliament, the Commission will continue to work on the rest of the AW proposals.

Discussion:

- In response to a participant's question about whether the EU can impose its regulatory framework on third countries, Dr Ralchev explained that EU enforcement powers are limited to its own territory. However, he noted that the EU engages in regulatory discussions with non-EU countries to promote collaboration and mutual understanding in animal welfare. Additionally,

beyond governmental efforts, EU businesses operating internationally have due diligence responsibilities to ensure their production and supply chains comply with EU regulations.

- EU Commission engages different subject matter experts through large consultation of stakeholders and with the Member States expertise.
- The main legislative body foresee the use of indicators but it is planned for define those indicators and methodology through an additional specific legislation.

4. Session 3: Advancing implementation of animal welfare standards

4.1. Animal welfare economic in animal production systems ([Link to view presentation](#))

Dr Hen Henk Hogeveen provided a comprehensive analysis of animal welfare from economic perspective with examples of practical approaches. The presentation emphasized the importance of improving animal welfare through both public and private initiatives, highlighting the potential for win-win situations where both animal health and economic benefits are optimized. Animal welfare is discussed in terms of economic values, which are not always monetary. Assigning financial weight to animal welfare is crucial for rational decision-making. Animal welfare is considered both a public and private good. Public good aspects are regulated by laws, such as EU regulations setting minimum welfare standards. Private good aspects involve higher welfare standards driven by farmers' motivations, market demands, and labelling options.

Discussion:

- AW has an impact on the economics, but the reverse is also true, how much are we willing and able to pay for AW. At farm level, different approaches can be taken and will influence the improvement on AW, and comparing these effects could be useful to measure this impact.
- In response to a remark about the importance of reviewing WTO agreements to facilitate the adoption of animal welfare measures by government officials, and a participant's question on how to address this critical step, Dr. Maciel (previous speaker) clarified that, since the inception of the WTO in 1995, there has been scepticisms about the compatibility of animal welfare measures with the multilateral trading system. However, as understanding of the system has deepened and interpretations of the provisions have evolved, it is now acknowledged that no WTO rules prevent governments from adopting trade-restrictive measures based on animal welfare concerns. Nevertheless, governments must ensure that these measures are designed and implemented in a way that is not unjustifiably arbitrary or discriminatory.

4.2. Animal welfare – holistic approach ([Link to view presentation](#))

Presentation by Dr Garcia Pinillos (One Welfare CIC) set the scene of a holistic vision to animal welfare by introducing the basic principles of One Health, One Welfare and the One Welfare Framework. Animal welfare is a key pillar of the One Welfare approach in the same way that Animal Health is a pillar of the One Health approach. Both apply a holistic view and foster interdisciplinary collaborations across different professions serving as tools that enable recognition of the value of improved standards of animal health and welfare.

It also introduced the 2022 UNEP resolution on the nexus between animal welfare, environment and sustainable development (AWESDE Nexus) scoping report, which also takes a holistic approach to animal welfare.

Discussion:

- The One Welfare approach might seem presets complex approach with many not straightforward elements but once you know about the interconnexions more you notice them. The one important thing to remember is that animal welfare is only one of the three pillars of One Welfare.

4.3. Communication, awareness, developing capacity building programmes ([Link to view presentation](#))

The key point to develop communication, awareness and capacity building programmes is to know the result you want to see on your public. Each type of programme has a number of steps to go through to

be able to be efficient. The [Care4Dairy](#) programme, that has a strong visual identity, is an EU project that well illustrate the 3 types of programmes with the different products that were developed. Another example is the Animal welfare training centre that was built in a twinning programme with Tunisia, that also led to new development with the implication of other north African countries.

Discussion:

- The public consultation is a relevant step to build programmes as it allows to obtain acceptance and involvement on them.

4.4. Public Private Partnership (PPP) ([Link to view presentation](#))

Rahul Srivastava (Capacity Building Department at WOAAH) presented WOAAH's on public-private partnership (PPP). A PPP is defined as “a joint approach in which the public and private sectors agree responsibilities and share resources and risks to achieve common objectives that deliver benefits in a sustainable manner”. Implying the importance of sharing resources and risks between public and private partners. The PPP is included on WOAAH Terrestrial Animal Health Code, article 3.2.6 encourage it and includes animal welfare as a sector to apply it. To engage in a PPP a clear understanding of who should engage on both side (public and private is key. It is also important to understand the differences between PPP and privatisation, a key difference being the objectives.

Through WOAAH [PPP Database](#) you can access different PPPs in the veterinary domain with examples on community engagement and support, monitoring and reporting, at regional or global level. At national level the PPP targeted support is provided to WOAAH Members that has completed a PVS evaluation, follow-up or GAP mission in the last 5 years.

4.5. Working group exercise

The working group exercise focused on building a PPP on AW, through 3 steps:

- Needs, benefits and impacts.
- Stakeholder analysis, mapping, and engagement.
- Developing a PPP project plan.

The participants were divided on 4 groups, each group focusing on a different topic:

- Transport of animals

For the transport of animals topic, the working group establish it was of high interest to develop PPP. They focused on the training of drivers where cooperation between the public and private sector to a PPP could be highly relevant to have a better implementation of AW requirements through trainings, notably focusing on the regulation. The main stakeholders involved being transport companies and association of transportation companies,

- Animal welfare during slaughter

For the AW during slaughter topic, the working group was only composed of EU Member States and considering the high integration of the slaughter activities in the EU regulation they focused their discussion on identifying areas where PPP could be applied. They identified the training as a potential candidate, the legislation being more flexible on this topic. They also identify tools that could facilitate inspection like cameras or AI, but it could be difficult considering the EU regulation that exist on the use of those tools.

- Disaster management ([Link to view presentation](#))

For the disaster management topic, the working group first focus on the definition of a disaster. They find that PPP was very relevant for disaster management as it is a moment when normal system are overloaded, and you need to prepare different back up plans with partners. The identified 3 key activities for the development of PPPs (risk assessment, contingency planning, and distributing knowledge and awareness, including simulation training. They concluded that PPP would also contribute to build trust that will help to manage the disaster situation, optimize resources and minimize risk.

- Dog population management

For the dog population management topic, the working group identified a number of keys activities where a PPP could be applied (reducing the number of free roaming dogs, promoting responsible ownership, illegal activities (e.g. trafficking), and public health risk (e.g. road safety). They then identified the key

areas in which they will need to create partnerships and the associated stakeholders. To finally go through the main steps to launch the call.

Discussion:

- The delegation of governmental power to private parties depends on the country's legal framework. To determine whether it is possible, one needs to examine country-specific legal provisions to see whether they allow or restrict such delegation. It is also important to keep in mind that not every public-private partnership necessarily requires the delegation of power. There are tasks that do not fall within the 'core' governmental functions and can be carried out by non-government officials.

5. Session 4: Animal welfare assessment

5.1. Animal welfare in production systems – Animal-based indicators ([Link to view presentation](#))

Dr Llonch presented an overview of the state of the art of animal-based measures (ABM) to assess animal welfare. The first part of the presentation focused on the current status of ABM, considering scientific literature and the utilisation of ABM by current animal welfare assessment tools (including labels, certification schemes, regulatory bodies, etc.). As a main outcome, cattle and pigs are the species that have received more attention so far, whereas small ruminants and horses are in the queue of validated ABM. In terms of welfare domains, animal health and nutrition are the ones that have a large variety of measures, whereas normal behaviour and mental domains received less attention so far. The second block of the presentation focused on research developing new ABMs to monitor animal welfare. Sensor technologies from precision livestock farming offer a great opportunity to monitor animal welfare, enhancing objectivity and offering a continuous welfare assessment. In the presentation, Dr Llonch presented a list of examples of technologies, including accelerometers, computer vision, microphones and GPS, to mention a few, that can be effectively used to monitor animal welfare in livestock production.

Discussion:

- system developed with the aWISH project could indeed be considered tools to support official control (e.g., cornea reflex for checking proper pig stunning); however, the method still needs proper validation.
- there is general need to validate PLF technologies properly
- there is need to establish indicators' threshold for PLF sensor systems, reflecting variability (according to production systems, breed, age, etc.) and, for further applications, establish guidance on corrective actions.
- PLF systems don't really address human animal bond however new technologies may help measure human-animal interaction.
- use of new technologies in rural areas may attract young people to work in the farming and agriculture
- possible policy solution (e.g. new EU common agriculture policy) could be explored to support implementation of PLF tools.

5.2. Animal welfare indicators at the slaughterhouse ([Link to view presentation](#))

Lotta Berg from SLU SCAW gave a presentation on animal welfare indicators at the slaughterhouse. She emphasized that such animal welfare assessments should focus not only on stunning and bleeding but should cover the entire process from unloading upon arrival at the slaughterhouse until the animal is dead and further processing of the carcass can commence. Hence, indicators should be identified for unloading, handling, lairage, restraint, stunning and bleeding, including establishing that the animal is dead. Furthermore, to be feasible and efficient, such a set of indicators should cover both input

(i.e. resource and management based) and out-put (animal-based) indicator, to fulfil the preventive intentions of the animal welfare legislation and include a sufficient amount of follow-up.

5.3. Fish welfare – EU Platform Animal Welfare own Initiative ([Link to view presentation](#))

Birte Broberg presented the Guidelines on Water Quality and Handling for the Welfare of farmed fish. The guidelines were developed by the Voluntary initiative group on the welfare of fish established under the EU Platform on Animal Welfare mainly because fish are sentient beings who can feel pain and distress, and because there is a large production of farmed fish of different species in the EU. The guidelines were acknowledged in June 2020 by members of the EU Platform.

The guidelines address water quality and handling, as both are important elements for fish welfare during all life stages and across all farming practices. The general principle behind the guidelines is that the keeping of fish carries with it a responsibility to ensure their welfare, as they are sentient beings. Examples of guidelines are, e.g. that those responsible for the keeping of fish should have appropriate knowledge, that a sufficient supply of water of good quality is essential for the welfare of fish, and that handling causes stress and raises activity as well as oxygen demand, and thus handling should be kept to a minimum.

Discussion:

- Fish welfare is relevant and important issue that still need more awareness and recognition
- Recently are many new research result on welfare for other species of farmed fish.
- In January 2024, the European Commission designed European Union reference centre for
- There is need for more awareness and activities to support implementation of WOAHS standards on welfare of farmed fish,

5.4. European Forum for Animal Welfare Councils ([Link to view presentation](#))

Eric Van Tilburgh (Belgium) presented the European Forum for Animal Welfare Councils (EuroFAWC) and their activities. The EuroFAWC aims to exchange views on animal welfare, ethical issues, and best practices concerning AW advisory bodies' work. EuroFAWC members cover a large field of expertise: veterinary medicine, AW science, animal ethics, AW legislation, implementation and control for all use of live animals: farm, companion, exotic, research animals, including animals in the wild.

5.5. Regional Expertise – WOAHS Collaboration Centre on animal welfare and EU Reference Centres for animal welfare ([Link to view presentation](#))

Lotta Berg from SLU SCAW gave a presentation about the WOAHS European Collaborating Centre on Animal Welfare, with IZS in Teramo, Italy and SLU Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare, Sweden. The two partners in the consortium have complementary competences and apply an approach where synergies can be utilized. The consortium has a steering Committee and take 2-year turns in acting as Chair. The activities include contributing to the WOAHS Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe, maintaining the WOAHS Network of Animal Welfare Collaborating Centres, linking good animal husbandry and efficient preventive veterinary medicine. The CC cover a wide range of topics, from sustainability and the UN SDGs to animal welfare during transport and at slaughter or depopulation, including contingency planning. The CC has also been active in Twinning with Tunisia and other countries in Northern Africa, and in various 'side projects' such as EURCAW-Ruminants and Equines, and the Care4Dairy Project.

Discussion:

- Need the for collating dissemination of knowledge resources on animal welfare was raised (e.g. online resources library), still proper 'knowledge management' will require allocated resources.
- Already existing tools may partially address those needs, e.g. list of references used for development Terrestrial Code chapters, WOAHS Training Platform.
- In relation to SDG and animal welfare conflict between improving animal welfare and negative impact on environment was raised with an example of more intensive and animal production may be more efficient use of resources (feed and energy) as trade off for animal welfare.

- Discussion highlighted the point that broader aspect need to be consider for environment, e.g. grazing plays significant role for biodiversity, feed management (local feed components) an manure management, re-use of heat that lead to better use resources,
- There are also examples for farming system that's ensure animal welfare with reducing negative impact on environment.

6. Session 5: Platform priority topics

6.1. Animal welfare in natural disasters

6.1.1. *WOAH update* ([Link to view presentation](#))

Tomasz Grudnik reminded that this priority topic was include in the Platform activities with the objective to help Veterinary Services to develop Contingency Plan on animal welfare issues with a pilot project for Balkans countries. The project led to raising awareness, sharing knowledge, working on preparedness and needing commitment, collaboration and coordination. A survey was also done to better understand the capacity of Members in the Europe region to deal with AW during natural disaster. After the end of the pilot project the Platform when through a phase of consultation to identify if and how we should maintain this priority topic. Feedback were positives and the Platform is now in a new phase with the objective to involve the all-region and to have a broader scope of activities. The first activity of this new plan was organise last January with the participation of 14 countries and was focused on [Disaster Management and Risk Reduction](#). The next event will be an online in September 2024 for all Members of the Europe region focusing on global and regional activities on Disaster Management and Risk Reduction.

6.1.2. *Update from SLU* ([Link to view presentation](#))

Lotta Berg from SLU SCAW briefly summarized a recent report (in Swedish) about animal health care in disasters. Much is known about how various types of disasters, being them natural (e.g. storms, floods, blizzards, earthquakes, but also effects of climate change, i.e. at least partly man-made problems) or man-made (e.g. nuclear accidents, chemical accidents, war and conflict situations), affect animal health and welfare, and this report focused specifically on how such disasters can be expected to influence the availability of veterinary care. Examples mentioned included the difficulties in contacting a vet when there are breaks in communications (power failures, phone networks and internet down), when roads are blocked due to weather incidents, or when the veterinarian does no longer have access to ordinary veterinary drugs for treating sick or injured animals, with a focus on food producing animals. The responsibility of the farmer to prepare for such events was discussed, as part of an overall contingency planning approach.

6.1.3. *Example from Greece*

Building on the outcomes of the meeting raised by the WOAHP Platform in January 2024 in Lisbon on: "Disaster management and risk reduction", Greece's Directorate General of Veterinary Services developed document to enhance the preparedness of veterinary services in responding to urgent needs during natural disasters. The documents address regional and metropolitan veterinary units and civil protection services. The instructions cover risk identification, farm data collection, contact details, transport and supply list preparation, and animal movement. In addition, it provides list appropriate prevention measures for livestock owners to protect their livestock from the consequences of possible natural disasters.

Discussions

- The more important points to focus on while preparing the management of a fire or a flood is to know who to ask, know where to take the animals (the most difficult part) and to have well-maintained farm surroundings.
- To prioritize animals above value goods with Civil Protection you need to build a process in advance with them to include animals as they have very strict priorities to respect.
- The management of intensive/big farms needs a high level of implication of the farmers with the local authorities and of organisation at farm level. They need to take responsibility and have contingency plans.
- The measures to be taken in the farms depends on the time available (a flood arrive usually to fast), on the species and on the climate. For example, in a fire in Sweden, the decision was

made to open the doors for ruminants and horses but for broilers the idea to of shutting down the ventilation because due to the climate in Sweden it will not have killed the animals just made them suffer, moving them was not possible because there was no space to receive them, euthanasia on site might be the best option.

- Ukraine gave multiple examples of cases where they used the establish coordination and collaboration system in between state services, with multidisciplinary commissions that draft and prove plans and measures to act in different situations. This allow the actions on the ground to be manage efficiently. There is also numerous ongoing trainings, and notably for soldiers on how to treat the animal they might find.

6.2. Transport of animals ([Link to view presentation](#))

The activities of the Platform on animal transport focus on strengthening collaboration and communication between competent authorities in the context implementation of WOA standards.

The Network of National Contact Points on Long-Distance Transportation in Europe has already 49 out 53 members nominated. The 3rd meeting of the WOA network of NCPT was held in June 2023 in Dublin, Ireland. This meeting was the first meeting of the network in face-to-face mode, which allowed all participants to meet each other and establish direct contacts. The 4th meeting of the network of WOA NCPT (online) is planned for early July 2024.

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. The feedback form participants confirms that the multiregional whole journey scenario workshops useful and instrumental to improve multiregional collaboration and collaboration between Competent Authorities.

In addition, a Self-Assessment and Monitoring Tool for evaluating the level of implementation of WOA standards in transport was initiated. The IT team will support the project starting in November 2024. In the meantime, the methodology and survey will be developed using the results of the Observatory thematic study.

Chapter 7.2. transport of animals by sea and Chapter 7.3. Transport of animals by land (Terrestrial Animal Health Code) are currently under review by a dedicated ad hoc Group. In addition, a preliminary discussion with IATA on the revision of Chapter 7.4. Transport of animals by air was initiated.

The WOA Observatory thematic study on Animal welfare during transport by land and sea: level of implementation of WOA standards and challenges faced recently finished 1st phase 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 results of the Thematic Study are expected to be presented at the end of this year.

Discussion:

- Stanislav Ralchev acknowledge the numerous of activities organised by WOA on transport and as it is a priority topic for EU it is why they are a main donor for those activities. He also acknowledges that the 4th Action Plan is well equipped to continue but also pleased to see the expansion to other regions and the well coordination between the revision of the standards and EU regulation.

6.3. Dog population management ([Link to view presentation](#))

The focus of this priority topic is on improving the Members' capacity through two roadmaps on dog population management. One of the roadmap focus on the Balkan region, the other on the Caucasus and Central Asia countries. To support the countries in improving their level of compliance with the WOA Chapter 7.7. a Self-assessment and monitoring tool for dog population management (SAM4DPM) was develop allowing countries to be autonomous in measuring their level of implementation and progress through time. The last meeting for both roadmap were organized last year, and by the end of this year we will have the next meeting for the Balkan roadmap. The interest on dog population management isn't limited to Europe leading to support by the Brussels office in activities in

the Middle-East and North-Africa region. To also better respond to Members' need a tailor-made assistance is proposed for any Member that which to have a specific technical assistance.

6.4. Animal welfare during slaughter ([Link to view presentation](#))

After a couple of years with limited activities, the slaughter priority topic his becoming more important with a regional webinar last December and the call to develop an online training module that will be published in the coming weeks. The adoption of the revised chapter 7.5. will be used as a base to develop the e-module. Once the e-module develop a phase of dissemination of the training will be launched. The objective is also to develop a self-assessment and monitoring tool for Members to be able to evaluate their level of implementation of WOA standards on slaughter.

Discussion:

- A specific activity could be develop to go more into details regarding the new revised chapter.
- The new chapter includes recommendations on slaughter without stunning.

6.5. Working equids

6.5.1. WOA update ([Link to view presentation](#))

The priority topic on working equids has been reshaped to better address the Member's needs. In September 2023 a webinar was organized to raise awareness on WOA standards, sharing existing tools and resources but also to identify the specific needs to start to build a new action plan. The 1st step of this new plan is the working equids event organize back-to-back to this meeting.

6.5.2. Tools to implement and improve working equids welfare standards ([Link to view presentation](#))

Joe Collins, Chief Veterinary Advisor at the Donkey Sanctuary, presented on what could help standards to go from theoretical to relevant, driving real change if implemented – hence the need for tools that will be taken out of the toolbox and used. WESLI (the Working Equid Standards Library of Information) is one such tool – robust and practical, providing core, practical knowledge for use at the coal-face. Developed by ICWE (the International Coalition for Working Equids) comprising four NGO partners, its purpose is to assist in the implementation of WOA Working Equids standards, Chapter 7.12. There are ten front pages each following a theme, such as 'Shelter' and 'End-of-Life', outlined in the chapter. Behind each icon is an extensive library of information providing information and resources that stretch the curious reader's knowledge beyond the chapter itself. WESLI is openly available at <https://www.icweworkingequids.org/wesli/>.

7. Field visit

The participants visited a dairy goat farm. They were provided with an overview of the daily operation of the farm that started 50 years ago with around 200 goats and has now more than 2000 goats divided in 4 groups. The activities are now divided between the 2 founding brothers, one managing the goats and the other managing the production of cheeses.

In addition, participants visited the Palacio de Fomento in Madrid city centre that host the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of Spain.

8. Main conclusions

- Importance of networking to improve collaboration in the region was the highlight of the seminar by participants. The face-to-face meetings allows them to create or reinforce network in between colleagues in the region allowing them to have privileged contacts with other countries in the region facilitating their daily work.
- Sharing best practices and concrete work examples is essential to allow Focal Points to learn from each other by exchanging ideas and building on their different experiences a common knowledge.

- WOAH support is needed to facilitate and promote networking and sharing of experiences. The discussion on how WOAH could support the Focal Points to better networking and sharing of experience led to different ideas that could be develop in the future (e.g. regional contact points for other priority topics than transport, sub-regional networks, e-depository and flash meeting on best practices or concrete work examples).
- Update on the WOAH activities at global and regional level is important for the Focal Points to help them in their task as focal point and to identify what is of interest to them and what would be interesting for them that WOAH develop (e.g. a specific presentation of the new chapter on slaughter)
- Training and updates on transversal and technical animal welfare topics giving Focal Points to acquire new knowledge or develop existing ones, it can also be the opportunity to create networking opportunities.

9. Event on Welfare of Working Equids

9.1. Case studies – sharing countries experience

9.1.1. *Spain – addressing welfare of equids at local festival in Cataluña* ([Link to view presentation](#))

In Catalonia every 17th January in honour of Sant Antoni Abat, patron saint of round-footed animals celebrate the festivity of “Tres Tombs”. The catholic religious origin of this festival to venerate its patron, is maintained today, being a set of celebrations throughout Catalonia and consisting of rides, parades, races and the blessings of working and domestic animals. The main rite of the Tres Tombs consists of making three laps with horses and carriages around the town.

In this festival participate equids that can have some animal welfare problems, that why “Generalitat de Catalunya”, as the competent authority created an Action guide for the proper operation for the “Tres Tombs” and other concentrations with equids of a similar nature. In this guide include instructions for all stakeholders and rules to assure that all animals that are participating are in a good condition and their animal welfare is respected. This guide is available online [here](#).

Discussion:

- For the moment, the objective is to raise awareness to the responsibilities of the participants, no sanction were applied,
- The next step is to have the guidance as part of a legal framework. The objective is to have a 2-3 year transition period and to follow-up with controls and inspections.
- They are NGOs calling to abolish this festival, this work and the tool developed is to ensure AW and to allow the festivity to continue.
- The competency requirements for the responsible for the equines is for the moment based on self-declaration.
- To ensure the transport's time limit of the equines is respect the declaration of the farm of origin's localisation is used. For the moment, there is no tool to monitor it.
- A point was raised on the importance of the vocabulary used to avoid raising any issues, the word specialist can be associated to a specific level of degree, the notion of performance needs to be well define.
- It was proposed that the temperature threshold proposed be revised considering the climate changes and also including other factors like humidity that allows to calculate the heat load.

9.1.2. *World Horse Welfare project in Romania* ([Link to view presentation](#))

Sandra Zafra, Public Affairs Officer at World Horse Welfare, presented the charity's community project on horse welfare in Romania. The project's overarching goal is to enhance the welfare of working horses in the country and promote positive attitudes towards working horses. The presentation included a summary of the assessment, monitoring and evaluation process that helps to plan a comprehensive program. The feasibility and baseline assessment performed by World Horse Welfare before the project

started aimed to obtain an accurate record of the number of equids in Romania and assess the welfare conditions of horses in selected locations. As hoof abnormalities were the main welfare issue observed, the first activities targeted horse owners and farriers to create a supporting network that actively contributes to equine well-being—supporting owners through basic hoof care and promoting community visits with vets’.

Discussion:

- The feedback is that farmers seemed open to participate and with positive feedback on the project.

9.2. Working group exercise

The proposed working group exercise focused on building a 3-year plan for a grant to support improvement in the health and welfare of working equids that support the livelihoods of operators.

3 different scenarios were used for the working groups:

- Working equids used for touristic city tours:

This group focused on the work plan for the 3 years of the grant. For the 1st year they planned to assess the situation, identifying the different issues that using working equids in this setting could cause and evaluating them. To do it they will need the support of animal welfare experts. For the 2nd year activities will focus on how to solve the problem to have a good service with the support of the experts and with developing guidelines. For the year 3, they will establish a booking system to follow the working hours, training for the use of the material and ensure hoof care by veterinary assessment.

- Working equids used for touristic tour in a rocky island

The 2nd group work on the assumption that competent authorities and NGOs were already aware of the issue linked to the environment and the lack of care. They budgeted their project with the money coming from WOAH’ grant but also with support from the municipality. They then assess the profile of the experts that should support the plan (engineers on structure of shelters and water, welfare specialists, communication experts), then study the situation and collect relevant information, before evaluating what can be done with the available funds to be able to prioritize. The last step being to evaluate the job done.

- Working equids used for waste/industrial transport in Madrid

The 3rd group decided to apply the one welfare assessment process to identify the issues: animals that were not fit for the work, people involved with the working horses that have not enough knowledge and the impact of the environment. They then focus on how they could resolve the identified issues: education of the people involved (owners, users, police, industries) and working on veterinary care. The foreseen deliverables were distributed on the 3 year plan taking into account the funds. The 1st year will be for the assessment and 1st training. The 2nd year will be for booklets, mobile vet clinic, trainings (indoor and outdoor).. The 3rd year will be to maintain the vet clinic, continue trainings, deliver more booklets and report on the work done to be able to have more funds and continue.

Before closing the event, a quiz was proposed to the participants to evaluate their knowledge on ICWE and its library before today and what will be their use of it after this event. 10 people took part in the quiz showing a limited knowledge of ICWE and its library (WESLI) but a great interest to use the available resources in the future, particularly the 3 “front pages” already available.

9.3. Conclusions and next actions

- The presentation and the working group showed the importance of working in collaboration on the topic and how collectively we can progress improving welfare of working equids
- To build on the momentum that was launched last September with the online meeting and led to this in-person event we propose for the next step:
 - flash online event to summarize the work done and find new topic to be addressed.
 - online seminar next year.
 - workshop back-to-back with the next focal point seminar in 2 years.

- The involvement of the Members of the group will be key to identify topics of interest that could also be discussed in flash meetings organized through the years.

List of annexes

Annex 1 – NFP AW Seminar Agenda

Annex 2 – Working Equids Event Agenda

Regional training seminar for WOA National Focal Points on Animal Welfare – Europe

AGENDA

DAY 1: 25 June 2024		
08:30 – 09:00	Registration and welcoming of participants	WOAH
Session 1: Opening (E. Hamelin)		
09:00 – 09:20	Opening remarks	Valentin Almensa (WOAH delegate for Spain) Estelle Hamelin (WOAH Sub-Regional Representative in Brussels)
09:20 – 09:30	Introduction, objectives of the workshop and ToRs of the Focal Points on animal welfare	Leopoldo Stuardo (WOAH AW Global coordinator)
09:30 – 10:00	Icebreaker Exercise and group photo	All
10:00 – 10:15	WOAH animal welfare working program and Global Animal Welfare Strategy	Leopoldo Stuardo (WOAH AW Global coordinator)
10:15 – 10:30	WOAH Platform update	Tomasz Grudnik (Veterinary officer – WOAH Brussels)
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break	
Session 2: Animal welfare legislation (E. Hamelin)		
11:00 – 11:45	Dissecting Animal Law: identifying differences in scope, structure, language, and institutional usages	Carolina Maciel (International Lawyer & Researcher)
11:45 - 12:30	Developing animal welfare regulation	Stanislav Ralchev (European Commission, Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety)
12:30- 12: 45	<i>Discussion/Q&A</i>	
12:45 – 13:45	Lunch	
Session 3: Advancing implementation of animal welfare standards: (L. Stuardo)		
13:45 – 14:15	Animal welfare economic in animal production systems	Henk Hogeveen (Wageningen University)
14:15 – 14:45	Animal welfare – holistic approach	Rebeca Garcia Pinillos (One Welfare CIC)
14:45 – 15:15	Communication/ awareness/ developing capacity building programmes	Silvia D'Albenzio (IZS Teramo) - online
15:15 – 15:30	<i>Discussion/Q&A</i>	
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break	
16:00 – 16:15	<i>Public Private Partnership</i>	Rahul Srivastava (WOAH Capacity-Building Department) - online
16:15 – 17:00	Working group exercise: Implementation of WOA standards – collaboration and partnerships	
17:00 – 17:30	<i>Discussion/Q&A</i>	
19:00	Dinner (hosted by WOAH)	

DAY 2: 26 June 2024

Session 4: Animal welfare assessment (E. Hamelin)

09:00 - 09:45	Working group exercise – group reports	All
09:45 - 10:30	Animal welfare in production systems – animal-based indicators	Pol Llonch Obiols (Autonomous University of Barcelona)
10:30 - 10:45	Discussion/Q&A	
10:45 - 11:00	Coffee break	
11:00 - 11:30	Animal Welfare Indicators at the slaughterhouse	Lotta Berg (WOAH Collaborating Centre/Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare)
11:30 - 12:00	Fish welfare - EU Platform on Animal Welfare own Initiative	Birte Broberg (Denmark)
12:00 - 12:15	European Forum for Animal Welfare Councils	Eric Van Tilburgh (Belgium)
12:15 – 12:45	Regional Expertise – WOAHA Collaborating Centre on animal welfare and EU Reference Centres for animal welfare	Lotta Berg (WOAH Collaborating Centre/Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare)
12:45 – 13:00	Discussion/Q&A	
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 – 15:00	ToRs of the Focal Points on animal welfare – follow up discussion	
FIELD VISIT		
15:30 – 17:00	Field visit – dairy goat farm	
18:00 – 19:00	Visit at Palacio de Fomento	
19.00	Cocktail dinner (hosted by Spain)	

DAY 3: 27 June 2024

Session 5: Platform priority topics (L. Stuardo)

09:30 – 10:45	WOAH Platform priority topics	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animals in natural disasters 	Tomasz Grudnik (Veterinary officer – WOAHA Brussels)
	Update from SLU	Lotta Berg (WOAH Collaborating Centre/Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare)
	Example from Greece	Katerina Marinou (Greece)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport 	Tomasz Grudnik
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dog population management 	Tomasz Grudnik
10:45 – 11:15	Coffee break	
11:15 - 12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slaughter 	Tomasz Grudnik
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working equids 	Tomasz Grudnik
	Tools to implement and improve Working Equids welfare standards.	Joe Collins (Chief Veterinary Advisor at The Donkey Sanctuary)
12:30 – 13:00	Conclusions and closing ceremony and certificates	
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	

Event on welfare of working equids

AGENDA

27 June 2024

Welfare of working equids (chair: E. Hamelin)	
14:00 – 14:10	Opening remarks
14:10 – 15:00	Case studies – sharing country experience:
	Spain - addressing welfare of equids at local festivals in Cataluña (25')
	World Horse Welfare project in Romania (25')
15:00 – 15:45	Working group exercise
15:45 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 16:30	Working work exercise – reporting and discussion
16:30 – 17:00	Conclusions and next actions

Rosada Gili Cabanillas
(Generalitat de Catalunya,
Spain)

Sandra P. Zafra
(World Horse Welfare)

