

Disaster medicine for animals



WOAH, Bucharest, 9 July 2025
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SLU, SCAW

Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare

- Located at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU)
- Director Professor Lotta Berg
- NCP for the protection of animals at the time of killing (reg. EU 1099/2009)
- WOAHA Collaborating Centre for animal welfare with IZS Teramo
- WOAHA CC for animal welfare – global network
- Coordinator of European Union Reference Centre for Animal Welfare (EURCAW) *Ruminants & Equines*
 - Director Professor Harry Blokhuis
- Project Management Centre for Disaster Veterinary Medicine

Why is preparedness important from an animal health and welfare perspective?

The level of threat has changed

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Climate change



Temperature

Global air temperature [🔗](#)

+1.3°C Above pre-industrial level

European temperature (over land) [🔗](#)

+2.3°C Above pre-industrial level

Arctic temperature (over land) [🔗](#)

+3.3°C Above pre-industrial level
(Latest five-year averages)

Ocean



Global sea level [🔗](#)

+10.3 cm Since 1993

Global sea surface temperature [🔗](#)

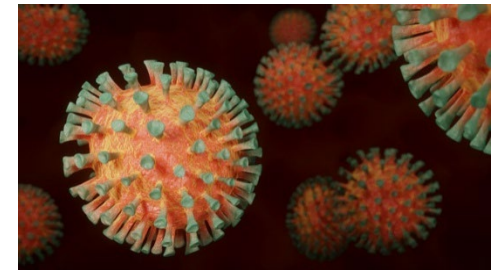
+0.6°C Since 1980 (60°S–60°N)

Global ocean heat content [🔗](#)

+0.22°C Since 1993 (upper 2000 m)

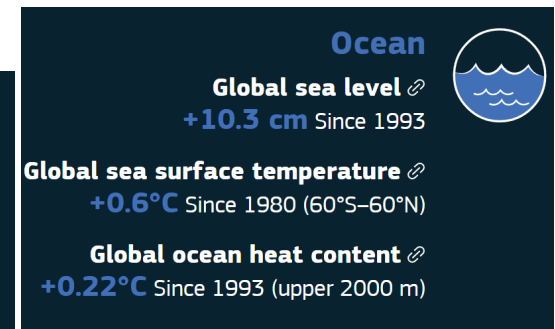
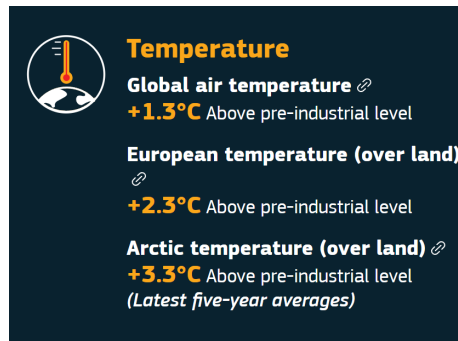
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New infections: Covid-19, mpox

Climate change

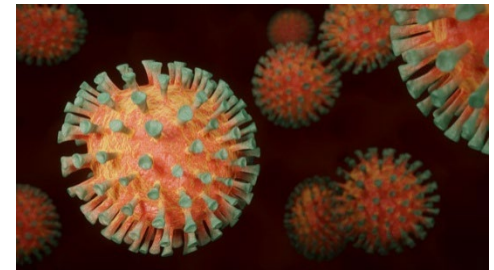


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The Competent Authorities wanted to know more

- Mandate to investigate
 - How do crises impact animal health and welfare?
 - What happens to the possibilities of providing animal health care during a crisis?

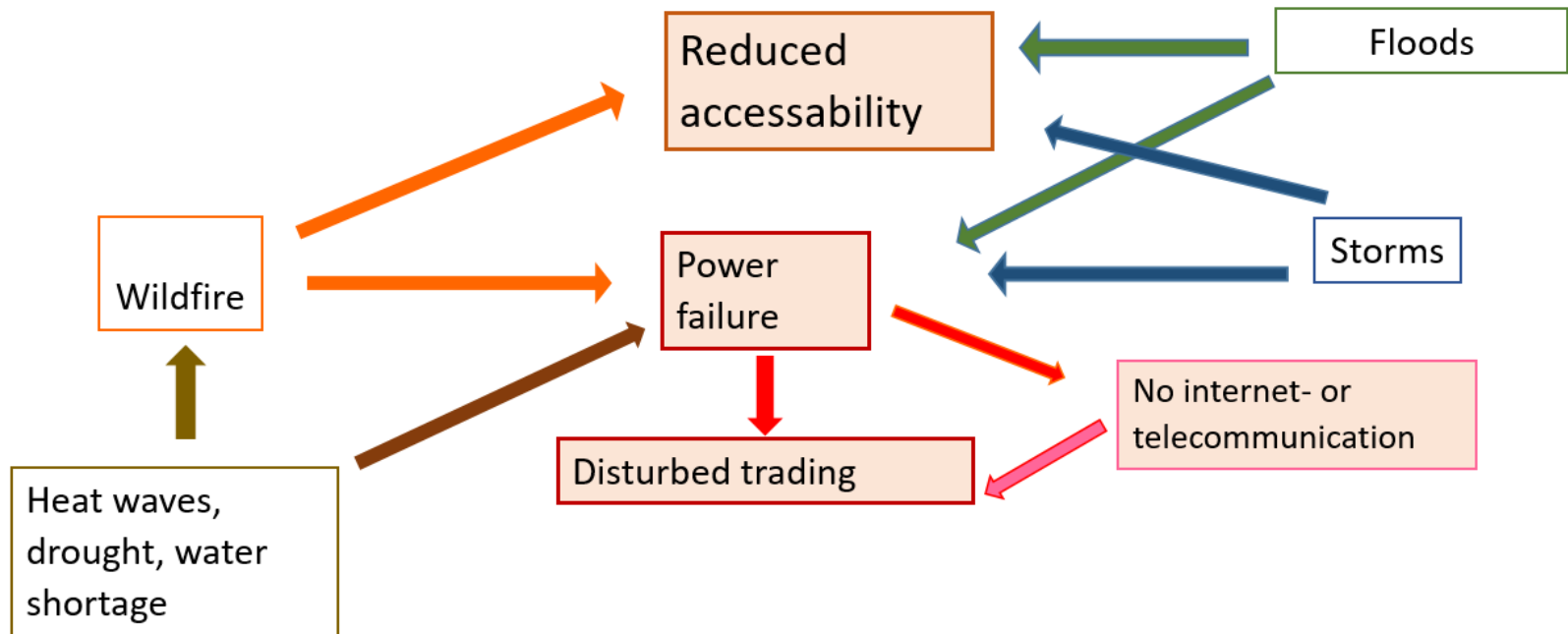


Important questions

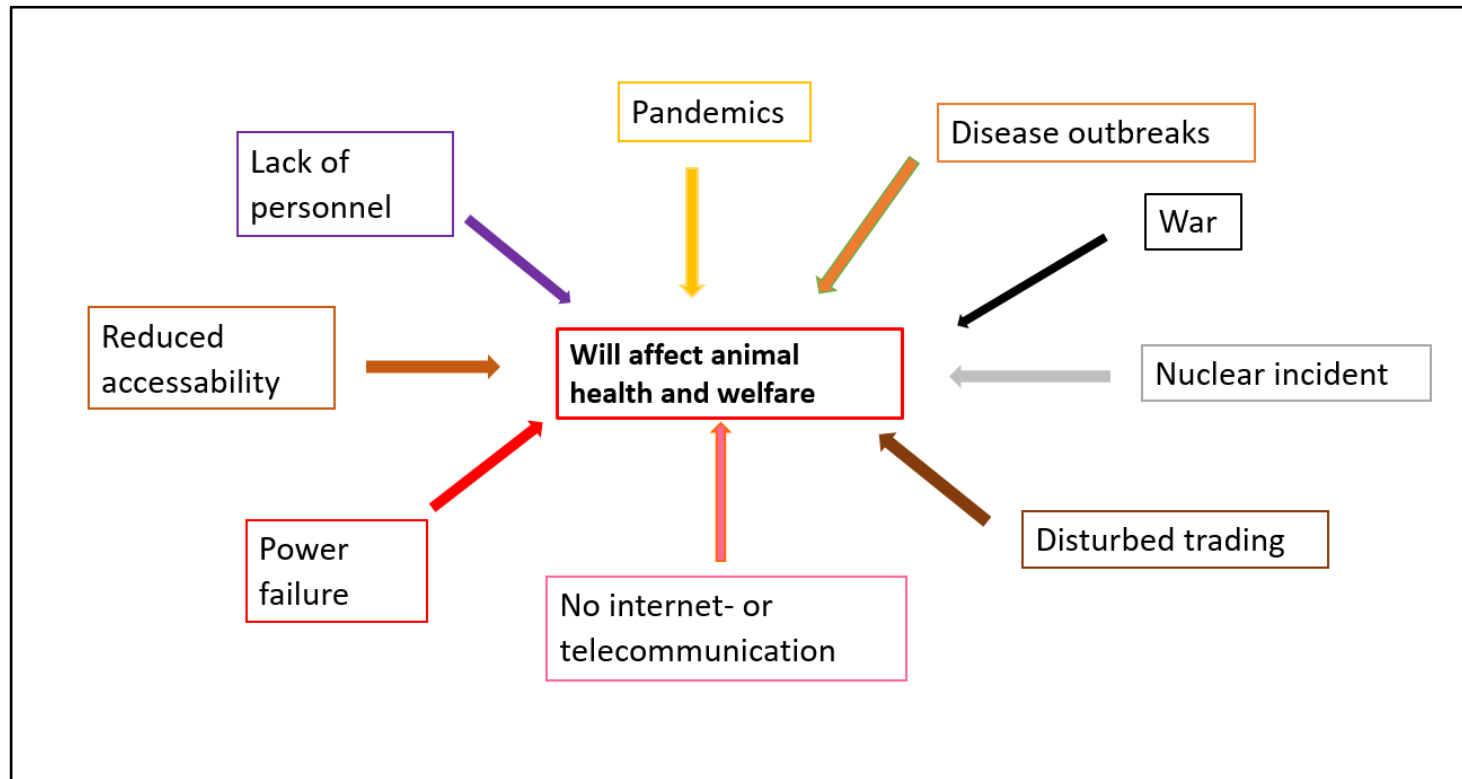
- HOW does the crisis affect animal health and welfare?
- HOW is the crisis affecting the possibilities to provide health care?
- HOW can the farmer be prepared?
- WHICH actions are needed from the competent authorities?



Natural disasters and their consequences



Many disasters and their consequences will affect animal health and welfare



Conclusion – there is room for improvement

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- Prevention of crises where possible
- Preparation for climate change
- Need for education, training and exercises
- Increase international collaboration (Nordic countries, WOAH)
- How will NATO affect the situation?
- In case of war or conflict situations, other problems in the society will occur simultaneously. Which ones and in what order can be difficult or even impossible to predict. **We need to be prepared for every event.**

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A Centre for Disaster Veterinary Medicine

Swedish Centre for Disaster Veterinary Medicine

- Pilot project 2025-2027 to evaluate possibilities for a permanent Centre
- **Safeguarding** of animal health, animal welfare, and supply of food products of animal origin
- All animals
 - Food-producing animals
 - Wild animals and fish
 - Service animals (military, police, customs, but also guide dogs)
 - Pets: people don't evacuate without their pets, also important for willingness to defend the country)



Source: UNHCR

Focus area: Preparedness and contingency planning

- **Climate related:**

- heat waves
- long-term drought
- water shortage
- wildfires
- storms
- floods



- **Increased preparedness and war**

- CBRNE*
- IT overload
- Refugees with pets → potential new infections
- No tele- och internet communication
- Power failure
- Interrupted/disturbed import/export



* Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive

Focus area: Preparedness and contingency planning

- **Existing and emerging threats**

- Vector-borne diseases, new and/or invasive species (e.g. *Impatiens glandulifera*- Himalayan balsam)



- **Mass evacuation** – big herds

- What, who, which, when, where, how, why?

- **Triage** for food-producing animals – eg. animals with burns

- Treat, slaughter or kill?
- Rapid decisions with great economic impact
- Direct impact: loss of farm and stables, feed, animals, income etc.
- Long-term consequences: treatment costs, secondary diseases, impaired immunity, reduced production, ash on fields and water supplies, reconstruction costs etc.



- Etc.



A knowledge centre

- A **network** for collecting and developing competencies
- **Collaboration** between authorities and institutes/organisations
- Research and **education**, continuous professional development
- **Training** and simulation exercises
 - Training of trainers
 - "When we drill together, we win together." Dr D. Tin
- **Communication**: website, workshops, seminars
- **Support** to veterinarians and other relevant actors



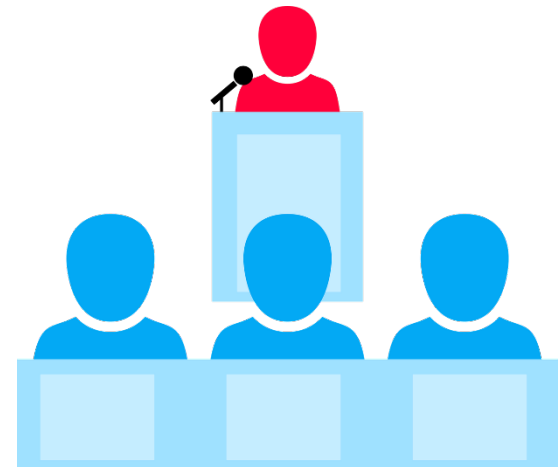
Next steps – autumn 2025

- Workshop: In case of a disaster, humans are a priority – How to deal with situations when standard medicines, materials, and equipment are not available
- 2-day visit with exercise at the Human Centre for Disaster Medicine
- Workshop at the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry
- Workshop: Where Do We Go from Here? (*Suggestions from report*)
- Workshop: Needs of the Competent Authorities
- Workshop: Needs of the industry, farmers' associations, NGO:s for food-producing animals
- Workshop: Needs of the industry, organisations, NGOS:s for pets, police and military dogs, rescue dogs, service animals, therapy animals etc.



We need you!

- Do you want to speak at our webinars in **November**?
- Does your country have a Centre for Disaster Veterinary Medicine or similar that we can **visit** in 2026-2027?
- Please contact me!



Partners

- **Swedish Veterinary Agency**
- **Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences**
- **Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare**
- Swedish Food Agency
- National Board of Agriculture
- District veterinarians
- Swedish Armed Forces
- National Board of Health and Welfare
- County Administrative Boards
- Centre for Disaster Medicine (University of Gothenburg)
- NGOs



Thank you for your attention!

Questions and suggestions
are welcome!

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