

Implementation of Animal Welfare Standards During Transport by Land or Sea

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AWFP Regional Workshop
Europe · 30 June 2026



World
Organisation
for Animal
Health

Organisation
mondiale
de la santé
animale

Organización
Mundial
de Sanidad
Animal



Agenda

1. The WOAH Observatory
2. The Observatory Monitoring indicators for animal welfare
3. The Thematic Study: Animal Welfare during transport
 - Context and Objectives
 - What we found: Phase 1 and Phase 2 results
 - The way forward: recommendations



The WOAH Observatory

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[Observatory - WOAH - World Organisation for Animal Health](#)



WOAH and its Observatory



- Members are encouraged to participate in the standard-setting process and eventually adopt the standards.
- But do we know if and how Members implement standards once they are adopted?

The adoption of the **Resolution N°36** by the World Assembly of Delegates at the 2018 General Session.

The Assembly recommends that:

“The OIE develop an Observatory to monitor the implementation of its international standards, to increase transparency and to identify constraints and difficulties faced by Members”



Objectives

Synthesis and translation of evidence to support decision making

Activities

Systematic
(cross-)analysis
of routinely
collected data

Ad-hoc data
collection to
address gaps

Assessment of
standards uptake
and effects

Enablers

Standardised, reproducible analysis method
Integrated Digital Platform



Core analytical outputs

1. **Recurring Observatory Monitoring Reports** (quantitative, longitudinal)
2. **Thematic Studies (TS)** (in-depth, qualitative or mixed-methods analyses on specific topics)
3. **Lighter, timely analytical outputs (prospective) - Short analytical or “flash” notes** addressing a specific, timely question, based on:
 - desk research
 - expert interviews
 - rapid analysis of available data



The Observatory monitoring indicators for animal welfare

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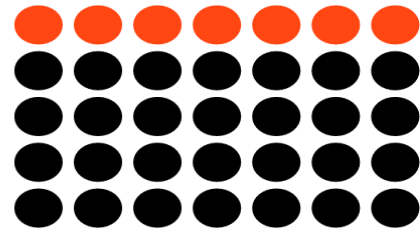


[The State of the World's Animal Health
- WOAH - World Organisation for
Animal Health](#)



Animal welfare — The Second Observatory Monitoring Report

What Level of Advancement have Members reached in critical competencies relevant to animal welfare,¹ according to Performance of Veterinary Service evaluation (2017–2023)?



20%

20% of Members evaluated (n = 35) had **national veterinary legislation on animal welfare** covering most of Section 7 of WOAHS standards, although they did not necessarily conform to these.

80%

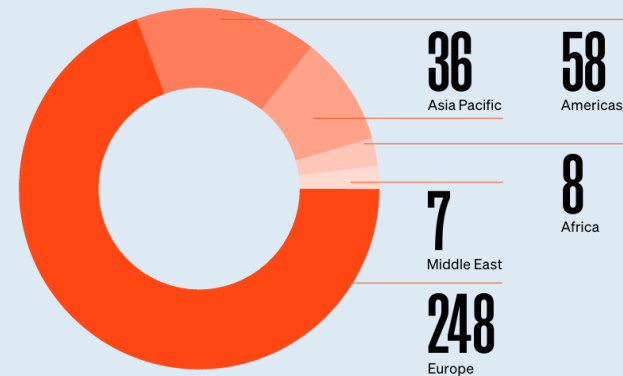
80% were assessed as having no or limited national legislation relevant to WOAHS standards on animal welfare.

How many Members have national regulations related to animal welfare (2005–2023)?

75 Members
353 Regulations
70% in Europe

75 members registered a total of 353 regulations that are related to WOAHS standards in FAOLEX between 2005 and 2023. 70% originated from Members in Europe.

Breakdown by WOAHS Regions of number of animal welfare regulations



Animal welfare — The Second Observatory Monitoring Report



Key recommendation

WOAH recommends that its Members prioritise at least some of the topics or WOAHS standards relevant to animal welfare, such as slaughter, transport, research and/or stray dog population management, to be addressed by national legislation or regulation.

Next steps for WOAHS

To continue refining the indicators using data on national regulations relating to animal welfare, potentially including contextual analysis and comparison of relevant Chapters of WOAHS Code and abstracts of regulations in FAOLEX.



Observatory Thematic Study: Animal Welfare During Transport by Land or Sea: How Members' Veterinary Services Are Implementing Welfare Standards

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[The Observatory's thematic studies - WOAH](#)



•Context and Objectives





Why this study, why now

- Millions of animals transported every day — transport welfare is a recognised WOAHP priority
- WOAHP standards exist: Terrestrial Code Chapters 7.2 (sea) and 7.3 (land)
- But global implementation had never been measured — this study fills that gap
- Findings feed directly into the ongoing revision of Chapters 7.2 and 7.3 and the new WOAHP animal welfare strategy
- This study: the first global baseline on transport welfare implementation



How we did it — you
were part of this

Phase 1 — Global survey (quantitative)

- 183 Animal Welfare Focal Points invited — 96 responded (52% response rate)
- Results reflect Focal Points' perceptions — the implementation reality on the ground

Phase 2 — In-depth qualitative

- 16 interviews and 2 focus groups across all five WOAH regions
- Explored the 'why' behind the numbers: barriers, enablers, context



• What we found





Phase 1 survey : 96 Focal Points across
all five WOAH regions

Frameworks exist — but practice is uneven.



Phase 1 — Regulatory frameworks

- Europe leads globally: 97% of European Members report a land framework; 80% for sea
- Global average: 78% (land) and 70% (sea) — Africa lowest at 48%/53%
- The land–sea gap: even in Europe, a 17-point difference (97% vs 80%)
- Most frameworks are nationally developed; few are regional or multilateral
- A framework on paper is not the same as consistent welfare outcomes on the ground



Phase 1 — What frameworks cover

- Approval requirements: common for vehicles and vessels (>80%), lower for facilities (~60%)
- Journey plans widely required: 92% (land) / 94% (sea)
- But key journey-plan elements — weather, road conditions — are least covered
- Operational tools less consistent: checklists 34% (land) / 44% (sea)
- Contingency plans: 57% (land) / 67% (sea) — gaps when things go wrong



Phase 1 — Enforcement: solid base, real gaps

- Most Members with a framework have enforcement mechanisms: 72% (land) / 74% (sea)
- Inspections mainly at border posts and on arrival; often systematic (every consignment)
- But: 6% (land) and 15% (sea) report no inspection at any control point
- Risk-based inspection — the efficient modern approach — is rarely used
- Priority gap: high for 60% of competent authorities, but only 30% of private sector and 28% of consumers

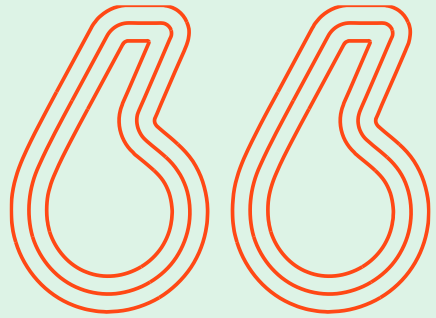
Phase 2 — What holds implementation back

- Limited capacity for training, enforcement and awareness
- Low political prioritisation — transport treated as logistics, not welfare
- Fragmented responsibilities: spread across veterinary, transport, customs and maritime
- Infrastructure gaps: vehicles, vessels, port facilities and resting points
- WOAHS standards valued but seen as broad — Members want clearer operational guidance



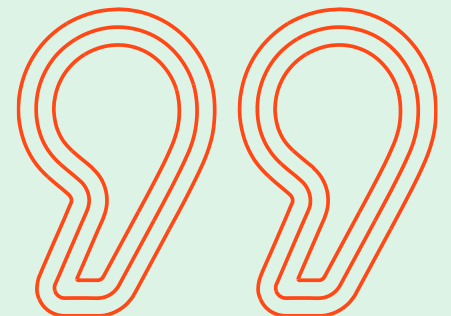
Phase 2 — What enables progress

- Strong interagency collaboration and well-coordinated legal frameworks
- Structured legislative review cycles to maintain alignment with standards
- Trade requirements driving improvements in welfare practice
- The outcome-based flexibility of WOAH standards — enables adaptation to local context



Recurring theme — Phase 2 interviews & focus groups

Once animals leave port, veterinary oversight is limited. Control shifts to the ship's master under maritime law — creating jurisdictional complexity, travel risks and communication gaps between trading partners.





•The way forward





Recommendations — Next steps for WOA

1. Align the Global Animal Welfare Strategy with what implementation actually needs
2. Develop practical tools: model regulations, journey-plan templates, contingency guidance and species-specific technical resources
3. Expand train-the-trainer and competency-based training across the transport chain
4. Facilitate peer-learning networks and regional platforms for harmonisation
5. Strengthen advocacy: reposition transport welfare as strategic, not logistical
6. Enhance cross-sector engagement, especially with maritime authorities



Recommendations for WOAH Members

1. Use this evidence to engage your Competent Authority on transport welfare gaps
2. Participate in the Chapter 7.2/7.3 consultation — your position shapes the standard
3. Advocate for interagency coordination: bring maritime and transport authorities into dialogue
4. Champion training and certification aligned with WOAH competencies in your national context
5. Build transport welfare into your national AW Action Plan



The evidence is clear. The opportunity is now.