



INTERNATIONAL COALITION  
FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

**The role of NGOs in improving animal welfare and  
supporting the implementation of WOAHA standards**

Julia Havenstein

Chair - International Coalition for Animal Welfare

WOAHA National Focal Points for Animal Welfare

Regional training workshop for Europe

*30 June - 2 July 2026, Budapest, Hungary*

Working together for better animal welfare

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The background of the slide is a photograph of three horses running on a sandy beach. The horses are dark brown or black, and they are captured in motion, with their legs extended and hooves kicking up sand. The beach is wet, and the horses' reflections are visible in the shallow water. The sky is overcast with soft, grey clouds. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

## International Coalition for Animal Welfare

Global Coalition of International Animal Welfare NGOs

Established in 2001

MoU with WOAHA

Members active across all regions of the world



THE DONKEY  
SANCTUARY



National Council  
of SPCAs



中国农业国际合作促进会  
动物福利与可持续农食分会

International Committee of Animal Welfare-ICCAW of  
China Association for the Promotion of International Agricultural  
Cooperation (CAPIAC)

Working together for better animal welfare

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**With expertise in:**

Slaughter and killing for disease control purposes

Animal transport

'Farm' animal welfare

Working animals

Equidae

Dog population management

Animals in disasters

Wildlife

Aquatic animals







Working together for better animal welfare

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**ICFAW**  
INTERNATIONAL COALITION  
FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

**Our objective:**

Supporting the practical  
implementation of WOAHA  
animal welfare standards  
worldwide

Working together for better animal welfare

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**ICFAW organization:**

**Steering Committee (SC)**

**Regional Working Groups (WG)**  
(aligned with WOAH's regional breakdown)

**Thematic working group: Gap Analysis  
(Transport)**

**WG Chairs build SC**



Standards themselves do not improve animal welfare.

To achieve sustainable animal welfare outcomes, the standards must be:

- ✓ Understood
- ✓ Accepted/owned
- ✓ Implemented
- ✓ Monitored
- ✓ Continuously updated

## Successful implementation requires:

- ✓ Veterinary Services
- ✓ Government support
- ✓ Stakeholders
- ✓ Research/Academia
- ✓ NGOs/Civil Society



## How does ICFAW support the implementation of WOAH animal welfare standards?

### Technical expertise

- Scientific and practical feedback
- Sharing field experience from multiple regions

### Practical implementation support

- Field investigations
- Identification of welfare risks
- Development of practical solutions

### Capacity building

- Training/participation/funding
- Workshops/participation/funding
- Guidance materials/participation/funding
- Sharing good practices

### Stakeholder engagement

- Enhancing dialogue
- Building partnerships
- Promoting cooperation

ICFAW aims at constructively working together with veterinary services

## Veterinary Services

- Leadership
- Official controls
- Expertise
- Enforcement of legislation

## ICFAW

- Technical support
- Practical expertise/
- Field observations/veterinarians' eyes in the field
- Support in capacity building
- Stakeholder dialogue

**Common goal: improve animal welfare**

## ICFAW at the 93rd WOAH General Session May 2026 in Paris





ICFAW at the 93rd WOAH General Session in May 2026 in Paris



- Participating in the WOAH side event *"Investing in Animal Welfare: From Standards to Implementation"* with Sarah Shields (Humane World for Animals).
- Hosting the informal side event *"Enhancing Animal Welfare During Transport: Practical Solutions and Multistakeholder Dialogue"*, bringing together experts from government, academia, industry, and NGOs.
- Maintaining an ICFAW information kiosk featuring educational materials, an interactive quiz, and a survey, facilitating engagement with delegates throughout the GS.
- Strengthening ICFAW's visibility as a global advocate for animal welfare and promoting collaboration with policymakers, veterinarians, scientists, and industry stakeholders.

## WOAH-ICFAW pig welfare in Southeast Asia

ICFAW and WOAH delivered a Pig Welfare Training of Trainers programme in Lao PDR and Viet Nam. Focus: humane pig handling, disease control, and implementation of WOAH welfare standards (Chapters 7.6 and 7.13).

Participants from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam received training and developed national action plans.

Training: animal welfare science, practical exercises, and trainer-led sessions to build local capacity.

Supported by funding through the Open Philanthropy Project, with ICFAW playing a key role in organization and delivery.

Follow-up activities are taking place this 2026 to sustain implementation and knowledge sharing.





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### Journeys, Journey Conditions, and Welfare Assessment of Broken (Handled) Horses on Arrival at Italian Slaughterhouses

by [Martina Felici](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Leonardo Ragni Costa](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Martina Zappalà](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Giancarlo Bozzi](#)<sup>2</sup>, [Piero Di Puto](#)<sup>3</sup>, [Michela Minero](#)<sup>4</sup> and [Barbara Padellaro](#)<sup>1</sup>

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17 citations in Scopus

ICFAW Members  
support research

**WOAH SRR for the Arabian Gulf – ICFAW  
organising webinars to enhance animal welfare in  
the region**

- 2022: Webinar on camel welfare
- 2024: Cycle of webinars 'Towards boosting animal welfare knowledge and implementation capacities in the Middle East' (including camel welfare)
- 2026: Further sessions planned on camel transport, risk assessment on farm, animal transport



From standards to practice on the example of animal transport

ICEAW  
INTERNATIONAL COALITION  
FOR ANIMAL WELFARE



**From standards to practice: ICFAW Member Animals' Angels supports implementation of transport standards and legislation for better animal welfare during transport**

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**Documents** animal welfare conditions using standardized investigation protocols.

**Analyses** recurring welfare problems, compliance gaps and risk factors.

**Reports** findings to the competent veterinary authorities and enforcement bodies.

**Engages** with transport companies and other stakeholders to promote corrective actions.

**Provides** evidence-based recommendations to improve transport practices.

**Supports** enforcement of animal welfare legislation and WOAH standards.

**Contributes** field evidence to national and international policy discussions.

**Develops** training materials and delivers capacity-building for e.g. vet students, police, participation in trainings for authorities (e.g.: BTSF).

**Advocates** for legislative, standard and practical improvements based on documented evidence.

**Monitors** progress through follow-up investigations and dialogue with authorities and stakeholders.

## **Animals' Angels' findings from field investigations on animal transport**

### **Scenario 1: National transports in the EU**

Domestic transport represents majority of animal movements in the EU

Limited systematic data available

Domestic transport not covered by COMEXT or TRACES

ECA and EFSA highlighted important data gaps

#### **Animals' Angels findings during field investigations:**

- Lack of official controls
- Suffering from heat/heat stress
- Overcrowding
- Unfit animals
- Dirty conditions
- Unsuitable vehicles
- Journey time far longer than on paper

## Fit for transport?





Insights from the field: June 2026

**ICFAW**  
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**In practice, short journeys are not low-risk!**

**Good planning, fit animals, proper handling, suitable vehicles, and effective enforcement are essential to safeguard animal welfare from loading to unloading.**

**Animals' Angels recommends:**

- ① Strengthening official controls, particularly for domestic transport, where inspections are often limited despite the large number of animals transported.
- ① Collecting and analysing transport data to identify recurring welfare problems and improve enforcement and policy.
- ① Providing regular training for drivers, handlers, transporters and authorities on animal welfare requirements.
- ① Enhancing exchange of best practices.



## Scenario 2: Long cross border transports

WOAH Statement January 2026: *Long-distance transport can represent serious risks due to missing or incomplete health certificates, unclear customs rules, commercial disagreements, and unexpected problems. These issues must be carefully planned for and managed from the start to protect animal welfare.*



## Animals' Angels' findings from field investigations on animal transport

### **Shortcomings in the route planning**

Weather forecast not taken into account

Opening hours of BCPs not taken into account

Insufficient number of drivers

No resting planned/no reservation

Refilling of water tank not foreseen



Heat suffering

Long waiting times at borders

Additional delays

No unloading/no rest

Exhaustion

Prolonged thirst

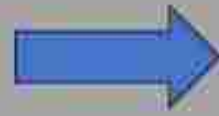
Suffering

### **Shortcomings in health certificates**

Animals not listed

Import requirements not met (e.g. tests & examinations, vaccines, weight)

Import requirements met but not correctly documented



Delays at borders

Rejection at borders

Severe welfare issues

Animal suffering/death

Killing of the animals

Financial losses

## Animals' Angels' findings from field investigations on animal transport

### **Shortcomings in infrastructure border/customs**

No priority for animal transport

No 24/7 dispatch

No shade

No possibility to refill water tanks

Lack of staff



Heat suffering

Long waiting times at borders

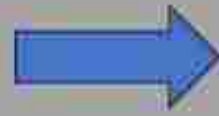
Additional delays

Exhaustion

Prolonged thirst

Suffering

### **Shortcomings in the official controls**



Unfit animals continue the journey

Transports continue the journey despite  
conditions presenting high welfare risks

Transports continue the journey despite  
vehicle fittings presenting a risk for  
welfare/safety

## Animals' Angels' findings from field investigations on animal transport

### **Shortcomings re. transport conditions**

Space allowance/height

Bedding

Access to water

Food

Separation



Exhaustion

Rest deprivation

Trampling

Prolonged thirst/hunger

Ammonia/respiratory disorders

Suffering

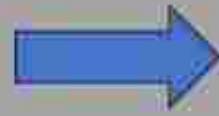
### **Shortcomings in vehicle fittings**

Dividers

Watering devices

Ventilation

Operational safety



Risk of injuries

Heat stress

Prolonged thirst

Animals' Angels' findings from field investigations on animal transport

**Unfit animals**



No prospect that conditions will improve during the journey  
Suffering, conditions worsening  
Immediate assessment and action where necessary



June 2026:

Long transport of animals

Destined for slaughter

Three countries

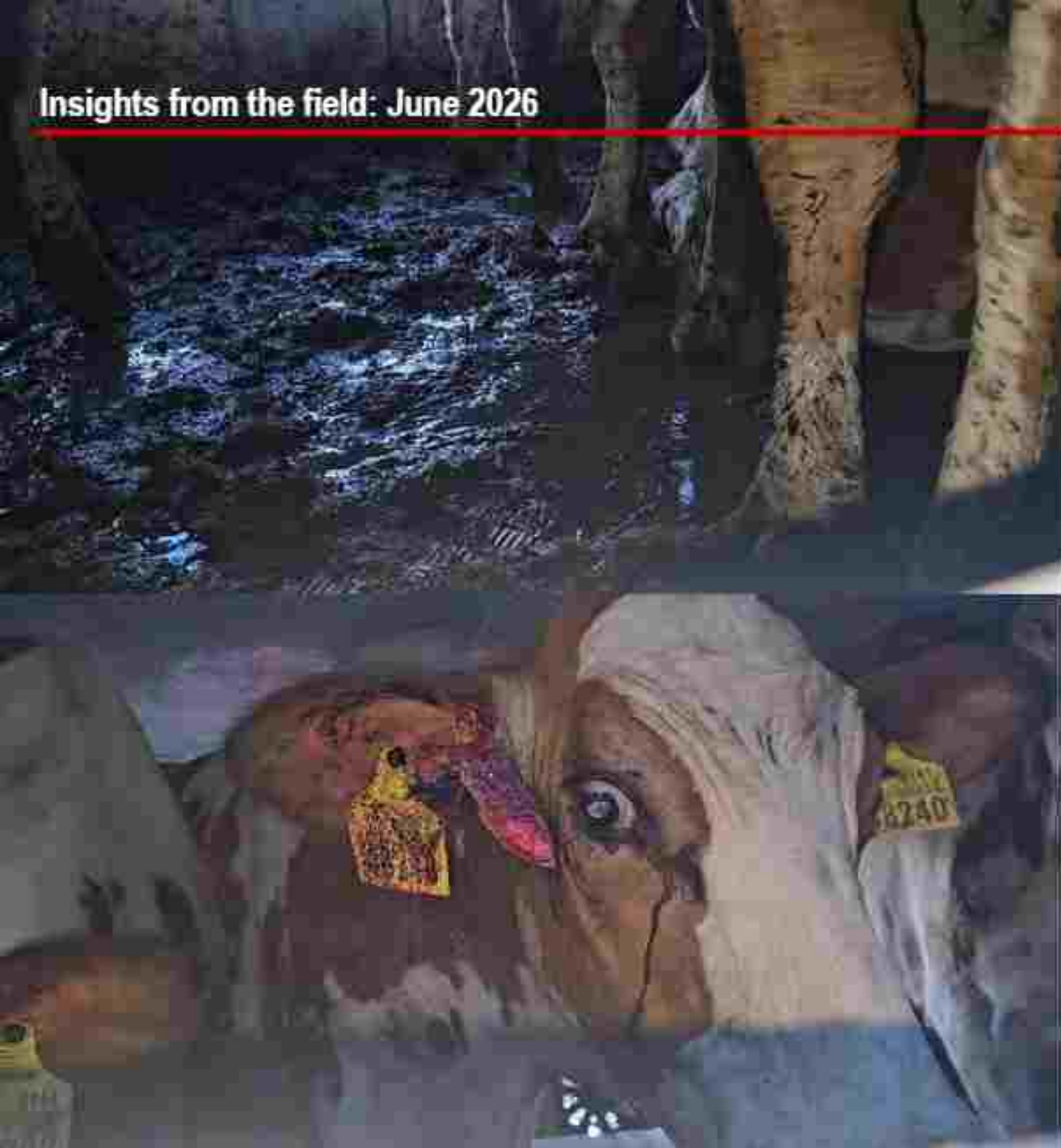
Two border checks

Customs clearance

Unfit animal

Crowded conditions

High temperatures



Insights from the field: June 2026

June 2026:

Long cross border transport

Five countries

Two border checks

11.5 hrs delay at first border

Additional customs clearance

Extremely dirty

High temperatures

## Animals' Angels recommendations

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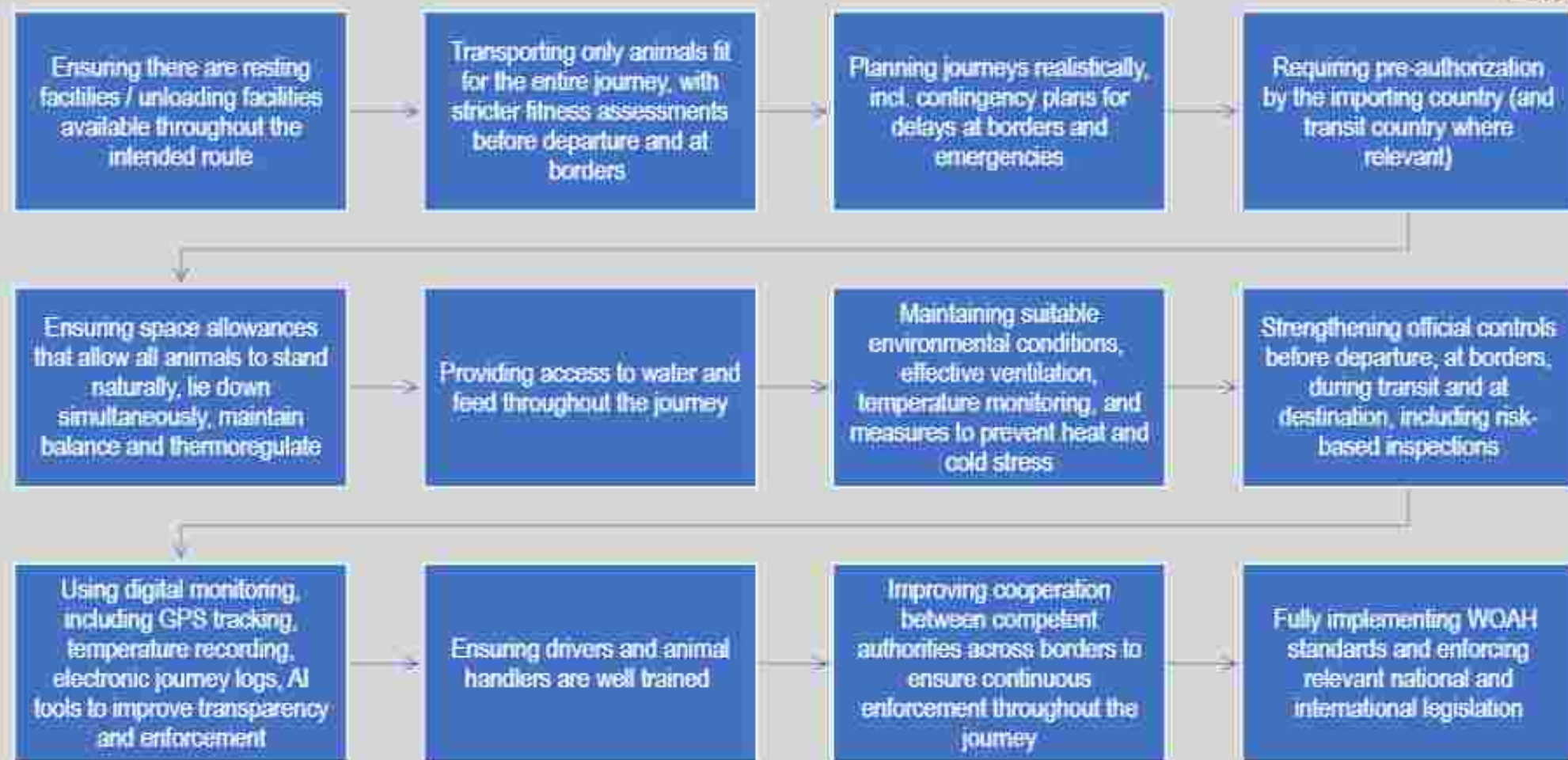


Avoiding long-distance transport by promoting local slaughter and trade in meat, carcasses, or genetic material instead of live animals.



If long-distance transport cannot be avoided, every foreseeable welfare risk must be prevented through proper planning, infrastructure, monitoring, and effective enforcement of animal welfare standards and legislation.

## Animals' Angels recommendations



# Thank you for your commitment to improving animal welfare

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