

Implementation of Animal Welfare Standards During Transport by Land or Sea

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World Organisation for Animal Health
Organisation mondiale de la santé animale
Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal

ANIMAL WELFARE DURING TRANSPORT

Agenda

01 **The WOAH Observatory**

02 **The Observatory monitoring indicators for animal welfare**

03 **The Thematic Study: Animal welfare during transport**

- Context and objectives
- What we found: Phase 1 and Phase 2 results
- The way forward: recommendations

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01

The WOAH Observatory

woah.org · The Observatory

01 · THE WOAH OBSERVATORY

Tracking implementation of WOAH standards

2018

Mandate: WOAH Resolution N°36 — to track how Members put WOAH standards into practice

OBJECTIVES

- **Identify implementation challenges**
- **Recognise good practice**

Improve effectiveness and use of WOAH standards

Monitoring Reports

Recurring · quantitative and longitudinal

Thematic Studies

In-depth · qualitative or mixed-methods analyses on specific topics

“Flash” notes

Lighter, timely and prospective · desk research, expert interviews, rapid analysis of available data

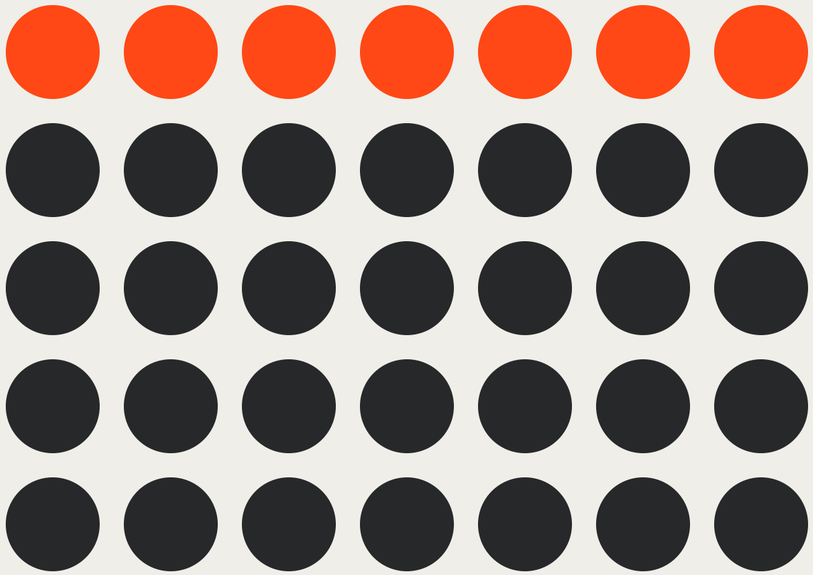
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02

The Observatory monitoring indicators for animal welfare

The State of the World's Animal Health · WOAH

02 · SECOND OBSERVATORY MONITORING REPORT



Each dot = 1 Member evaluated (n = 35)

20% had national veterinary legislation on animal welfare covering **most of Section 7** of the WOAH standards — although this does not mean conformity

80% were assessed as having **no or only limited** national legislation relevant to WOAH's standards on animal welfare

Data source: PVS Information System — Performance of Veterinary Services evaluations, 2017–2023 (35 Members)

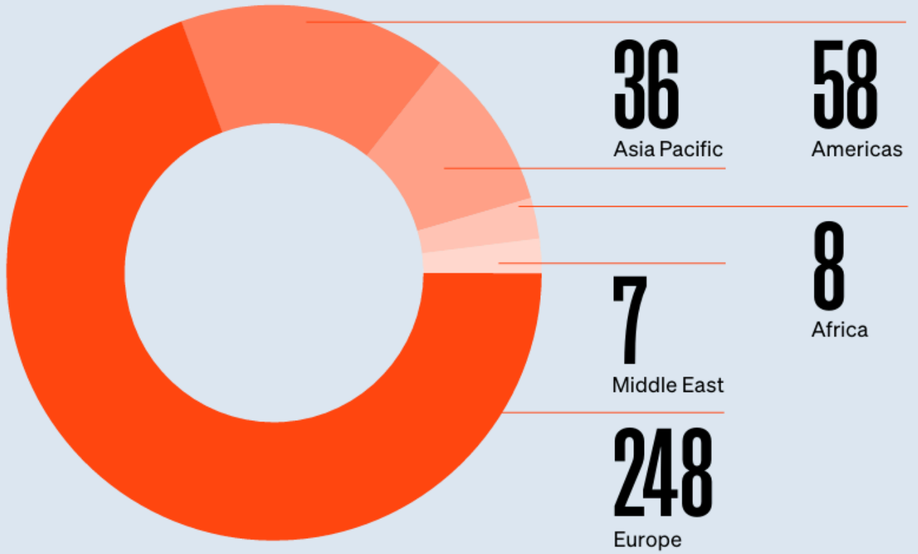
02 · SECOND OBSERVATORY MONITORING REPORT

75 Members registered national regulations related to animal welfare

353 animal welfare-related regulations registered between 2005 and 2023

70% of these regulations originate from European Members

Breakdown by WOAH Regions of number of animal welfare regulations



Data source: FAOLEX regulatory database, 2005–2023 — Second Observatory Monitoring Report

02 · SECOND OBSERVATORY MONITORING REPORT

Key recommendations

Key recommendation

WOAH recommends that its Members prioritise at least some of the topics or WOAH 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 WOAH

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

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03

Observatory Thematic Study: Animal Welfare During Transport by Land or Sea

How Members' Veterinary Services Are Implementing Welfare Standards

The Observatory's thematic studies · WOAH

03 · CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

Why this study, why now

1

Millions of animals transported every day

Transport welfare is a recognised WOAH priority

2

WOAH standards exist

Terrestrial Code Chapters 7.3 (land) and 7.2 (sea)

3

Implementation never measured

But global implementation had never been measured — this study fills that gap

4

Feeding WOAH work programme

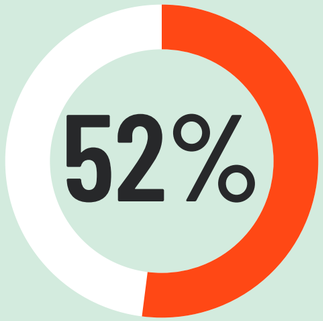
Findings feed the revision of Chapters 7.2 and 7.3 and the new WOAH animal welfare strategy

This study: the first global baseline on transport welfare implementation

03 · CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

How we did it — you were part of this

PHASE 1 · GLOBAL SURVEY (QUANTITATIVE)



96
of 183 Animal Welfare Focal Points invited responded

30 of 52 European Focal Points responded (58%)

Results reflect Focal Points' perceptions — the implementation reality on the ground

PHASE 2 · IN-DEPTH QUALITATIVE

16
interviews

2
focus groups

5
WOAH regions

3 European Members interviewed

2 European Members in the focus groups

Explored the "why" behind the numbers: barriers, enablers, context

Source: WOAH Observatory Thematic Study — Phase 1 survey (Table 1) and Phase 2 participant description



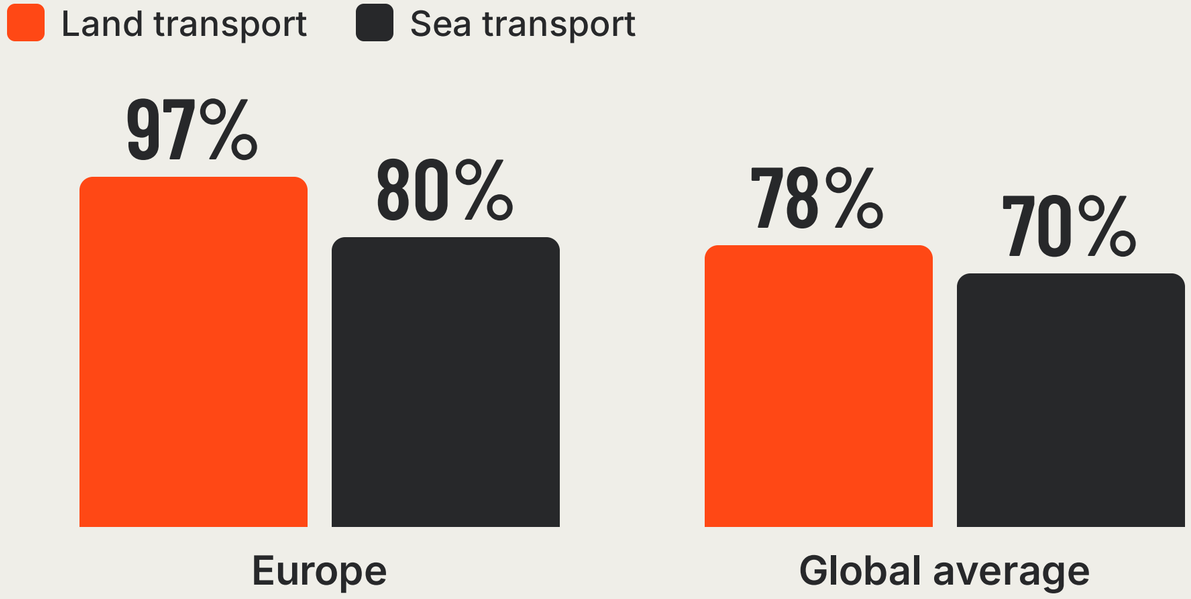
PHASE 1 SURVEY · 96 FOCAL POINTS · ALL FIVE WOAH REGIONS

Frameworks exist — but practice is uneven.

PHASE 1 · REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

Existence of a regulatory framework

Members reporting a regulatory framework for transport welfare



Most frameworks are nationally developed; few are regional or multilateral

Source: WOAH Observatory Thematic Study on animal welfare during transport — Phase 1 global survey (96 Animal Welfare Focal Points)

PHASE 1 · WHAT FRAMEWORKS COVER

Characteristics and requirements vary greatly

	Journey plan required by	Checklist of actions to be followed by actors during transport required by	Contingency plans in place for transport required by
Land	92%	34%	57%
	of respondents		
Sea	94%	44%	67%
	of respondents		

REQUIREMENTS IN PLACE

>80% for vehicles and vessels

~60% for holding facilities and containers

KEY GAP

Key journey-plan elements — weather and road conditions — are the least covered

Source: WOAH Observatory Thematic Study on animal welfare during transport — Phase 1 global survey (96 Animal Welfare Focal Points)

PHASE 1 · ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement mechanisms and inspections

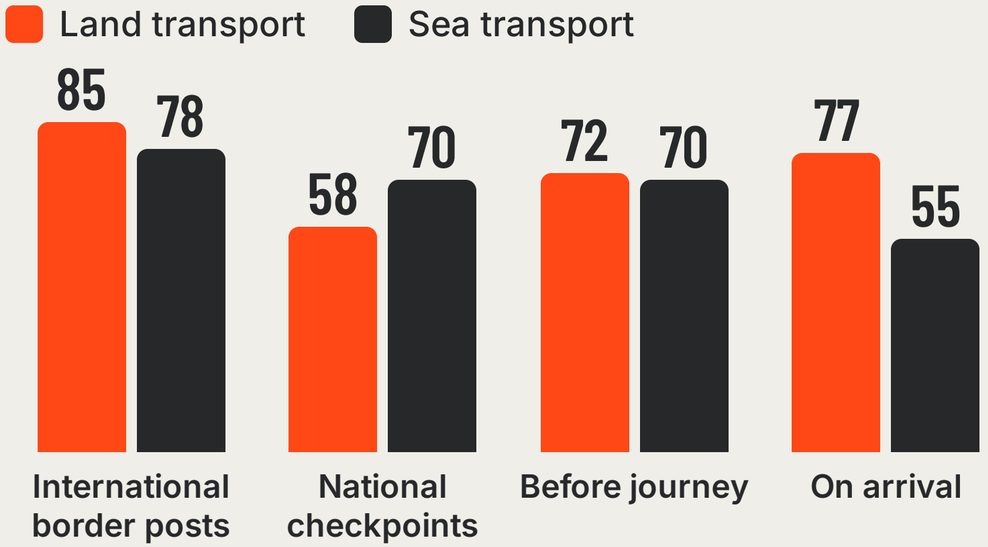
Most Veterinary Authorities have an enforcement mechanism...

by land **72%**

by sea **74%**

reported having a mechanism in place to enforce the regulatory requirements related to animal welfare during transport

... that includes physical inspections and documentary checks



6% by land

15% by sea

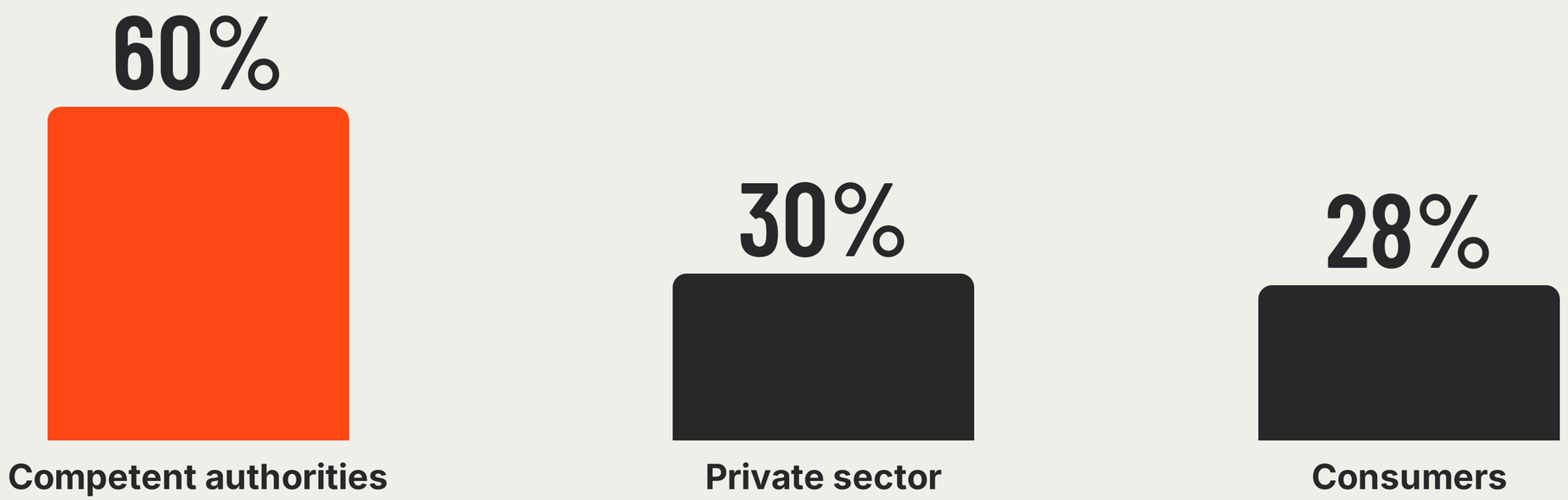
reported performing no inspection (physical or documentary) at any control point

Source: WOAH Observatory Thematic Study — Phase 1 global survey; share of Members performing at least one type of inspection at each control point

PHASE 1 · PRIORITISATION

Priority given to transport welfare

Share of respondents rating transport welfare as a high priority, by stakeholder



Source: WOAH Observatory Thematic Study on animal welfare during transport — Phase 1 global survey (96 Animal Welfare Focal Points)

PHASE 2 · KEY FINDINGS

Enabling factors



Integration into national legislation frameworks

Varies by context, with standards often used as **guiding frameworks** in mature systems and more **directly adopted** elsewhere, though operationalisation remains challenging.



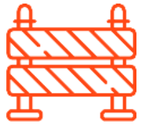
Collaboration and Trade Incentives

Progress is supported by **interagency collaboration**, structured legislative review cycles, and **alignment driven by trade requirements**.

Source: WOAH Observatory Thematic Study — Phase 2 interviews and focus groups

PHASE 2 · KEY FINDINGS

Barriers to implementation



Structural constraints

Implementation is constrained by geography, staffing shortages, fragmented responsibilities and **limited inspection capacity**.



Need for practical and operational support

There is a clear need for more operational **guidance**, including training, model documentation, plain-language resources and **opportunities** for peer learning and regional collaboration.



Specific challenges in sea transport

Includes limited oversight, **jurisdictional complexity**, travel risks and **communication gaps** between trading partners.



Fragmented governance

Transport oversight involves multiple authorities, creating ambiguity around **accountability**.



Political priorities

In some contexts, animal transport is viewed as a **logistical** or **trade issue**, rather than a welfare issue.

Source: WOAH Observatory Thematic Study — Phase 2 interviews and focus groups

RECURRING THEME · PHASE 2 INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

> **“Sea transport emerged as a particularly complex domain. Once animals depart port, veterinary authorities often have limited oversight, as jurisdiction shifts under maritime law.”**

WOAH Observatory Thematic Study report — Phase 2 findings

THE WAY FORWARD

Recommendations for WOAH

1

Develop practical operational tools such as model regulations, journey plan templates, contingency guidance and species-specific technical resources.

2

Facilitate peer learning networks and regional platforms to support information exchange.

3

Enhance cross-sector engagement, particularly with maritime authorities.

THE WAY FORWARD

Recommendations for WOAH Members

1

Strengthen institutional mandates and clarify cross-ministerial responsibilities.

2

Invest in training, certification systems, and professional development.

3

Improve interagency coordination for maritime oversight.

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QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION · 5 MINUTES

The evidence is clear. The opportunity is now.

