



Vesna Dakovic  
Delegate of Montenegro  
Vice President of the Regional  
Commission for Europe

It is my great pleasure to contribute to the 2022 Newsletter of the WOAAH Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe. It was an even greater pleasure for me to participate in the preparation and development of the Third action plan 2021-2023 and to chair the meetings of the Steering Group of the Platform since the new composition of the Steering Group in 2021. For excellent work in achieving the goals of the Third Action Plan, I must praise the work of all colleagues from the steering group, members and observers, who gave their full contribution to the implementation of the activities, as well as the work of the experts who supported those activities. The Sub-Regional Representation office in Brussels provided full support for the achievement of all defined actions, and I have special thanks to them. I must be a bit personal; this Platform gave Montenegro impetus for the adopted national plan for dog population control, an important goal for all Balkan countries. With the wishes for further successful work of the Platform, I look forward to future joint successes.

**RECAP**

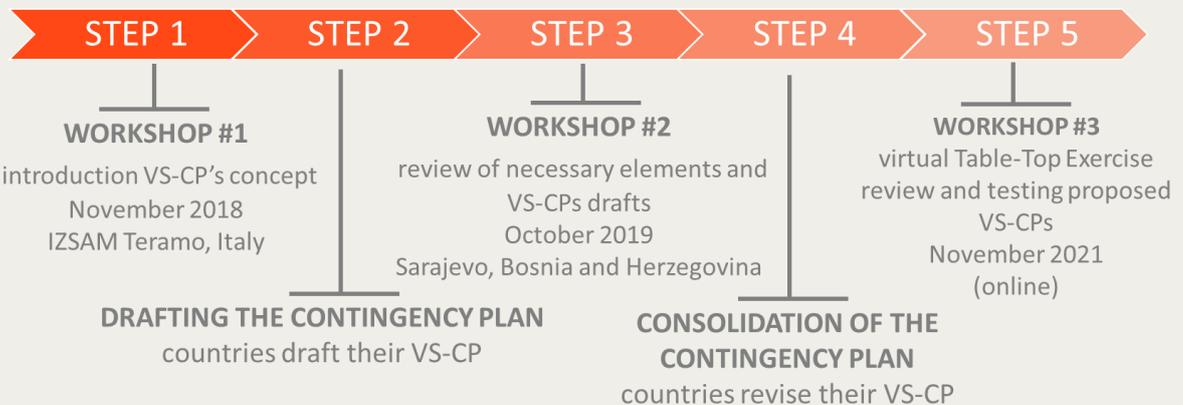


**TOP NEWS**

**PILOT PROJECT ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT**

In 2018, the Platform launched a stepwise pilot approach aiming at supporting selected Balkan countries in planning their actions regarding animal welfare and ensure proper livestock, wildlife, and companion animal assistance during and after natural disasters, in line with the WOAAH guidelines. The specific objective was to enhance their management and response capacity on animal welfare during natural disaster situations by supporting the development of the Veterinary Services Contingency Plans (VS-CP) for flooding scenarios and understanding how to mainstream their activities in the National Disaster Management and Risk Reduction mechanism.

The project was completed in November 2021, with the organization of a TableTop Exercise (TTX), in collaboration with the Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell’Abruzzo e del Molise “G. Caporale” IZSAM/WOAAH Collaborating Centres. Over 40 experts from 9 Balkan Members attended the event to discuss and propose how to improve the model contingency plans proposed by Romania and Bulgaria, and to embed the lessons learned during earlier emergencies when developing or revising protocols and operating procedures employed in managing catastrophic events.



**GOVERNANCE**

**NEW COMPOSITION OF THE STEERING GROUP**

According to the new Terms of Reference of the Platform, the WOAAH Regional Commission for Europe at its meeting during the 88th WOAAH General Session in May 2021 agreed on the new composition of the Steering Group for the Platform on Animal Welfare as follows: Ireland, Israel, Kazakhstan, North Macedonia, Portugal.

The new members were welcomed by their predecessors during the 17th meeting of the Steering Group held online in November 2021.



**Transport**

Kick-off meeting of the network of National Contact Points on long-distance transportation in Europe

Multi-regional Whole Journey Scenario workshop on transport between Europe and Middle East by land and by sea

4th Regional workshop on dog population management for Balkan countries demonstrated progress of the regional roadmap towards full implementation WOAH standards by 2025

**Dog population management**



**Working equids**

Analysis of the 2019 base-line survey as the first step for building the awareness campaign on the welfare of working equids for Central Asia and Caucasus countries

Steering Group meetings:  
- SG17 (October 2021)  
- SG18 (April 2022)

Stakeholders' consultation meetings:  
- 6th (October 2021)  
- 7th (July 2022)

**Governance**



Following the adoption of "Terms of References" in 2020, the WOAH network of National Contact Points on long-distance transport in Europe, with 33 represented countries at the kick-off meeting, initiated work toward strengthening collaboration and communication between Competent Authorities to improve animal welfare during long distance transport.

Multi-regional Whole Journey Scenario workshop with the participation of 17 WOAH Members from Europe and the Middle East highlighted the need for strengthening communication and collaboration between Competent Authorities and all actors involved in the transport of live animals and emphasized the benefits of appropriate planning and emergency procedures, including the processes for their verification.

Lincoln Memorial University College of Veterinary Medicine, in conjunction with the WOAH, conducted a survey among Europe WOAH Members (91% responded) on the levels of "Veterinary Services' preparedness for animal welfare emergencies during natural disasters". The survey results showed a wide range of WOAH Europe Member Countries capacity to respond to animal welfare in natural disasters. The most frequently identified gaps occurred with budgets, trained personnel, equipment, supplies and legal authority.

The results of the survey and experience gained from the pilot project on disaster management will provide the baseline for the WOAH Platform for Animal Welfare Europe to implement more focused and actionable support to its Members in the future.

**WHAT'S NEXT**

**PRESENTATION OF THE SAM TOOL 2.0**

Since 2015, the Self-Assessment and Monitoring Tool (SAM Tool 1.0) has helped eleven Balkan countries to assess the progressive implementation of the WOAH Standards on stray dog control, and to identify possible gaps in their capacity to address animal welfare issues in this field. In this vein, a new SAM Tool 2.0 version will be offered by the Platform in 2023, in order to make WOAH Members entirely self-sufficient in monitoring and assessing the progresses of their own individual roadmaps, aiming at achieving the full implementation of WOAH standards on dog population management by 2025 in the Balkans and 2030 in West Eurasia. Such an approach could be easily tailored to other regional or sub regional contexts, due to the flexibility of this data management tool.

**UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2022**



**VISIT US**

The website of the WOAH Platform is dedicated to share the information on activities of the Platform <http://awp.woah.org>

As part of the new communication strategy and technical upgrade, the website of the Platform will be integrated to the new WOAH Regional website for Europe.

The migration will start this fall to be completed, for the most recent events by early 2023. [Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe - WOAH – Europe](#) .



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