

Minutes

Fifth meeting of the **EU Platform on Animal Welfare**

17 June 2019, Berlaymont Building

**1. Fifth meeting of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare (the Platform)**

The meeting was web streamed. Click [here](#) to access the recording.

**2. List of points discussed**

**2.1. Opening session**

**2.1.1. Introduction and welcome to participants**

The Chair, *Ms Bucher*, Director General for Health and Food Safety, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

**2.1.2. Anne Bucher, Director General for Health and Food Safety – Presentation and adoption of the agenda**

*Ms Bucher* presented the draft agenda of the meeting. As no additional points were asked to be included, the agenda was adopted as tabled.

**2.1.3. Simona Popa, Adviser at the Animal Welfare Directorate within the Romanian Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority - Romanian priorities regarding animal welfare during transport for export purposes**

*Ms Popa* introduced the national legislation on animal welfare during transport and added that the Romanian authorities drafted guides for better understanding and implementation of (EC) Council Regulation 1/2005 and for approval of means of transport. The implementation of this regulation and the 2015 Judgement of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in Case C-424/1 are the main priorities of the Romanian Presidency as Romania exports livestock by road and by sea to Turkey and Middle-East countries. The Romanian authorities noticed unrealistic planning of journeys and loading of animals during extreme temperatures in road transport. Regarding sea transport, the 5 years livestock vessels certificate is considered too long and veterinarians lack of the technical knowledge on sea vessels. To address those issues, Romanian authorities took three types of actions. Firstly, they gave instructions to the official veterinarians, transporters and exporters on how to assess realistic aspects of the journey in terms of temperature and technical issues. Secondly, they trained official's veterinarians and disseminated the animal transport guides project from which Romania was a partner through the Banat University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine. Thirdly, they drafted legislation, on maritime transporters and livestock vessels.

*Ms Popa* also presented the outcome of a TAIEX workshop in Bucharest on sea transport where both Member States and third countries exchanged good practices. There is a need for an updated network document on livestock as well as more technical assistance from marine surveyors to veterinarians. *Ms Popa* proposed the establishment of a network of national contact points for animal welfare across all OIE Member States and reminded that the requirements for long distance transport concerned all parties involved.

#### **2.1.4. Questions and answers (2 interventions)**

*Germany* asked how to better exchange information between Member States and with third countries. Germany added that information on the (un)loading places must be reliable.

*Eurogroup for Animals* asked how Romania will measure the effectiveness of their new policies and stressed that no audits was planned from the European Commission. *Eurogroup for Animals* also asked Romania about considering any suspensions for transport during the summer period.

*Ms Popa* replied that they could measure effectiveness of their policy by checking the number of notifications of non-compliance they received from national contact points and possibly from third countries. Concerning the exports during summer, she reminded Platform members that exports were stopped last year due to extreme temperatures and that animals shouldn't be loaded if the vehicles cannot maintain the mandatory level of temperature. *Ms Popa* explained that the national authority will make sure that the legislation and requirements are observed.

#### **2.1.5. Stanislav Ralchev, Policy Officer, Unit 'Animal Health and Welfare', Directorate Crisis Management in Food, Animals and Plants, DG SANTE - Roadmap for the evaluation of the EU Strategy for the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2012-2015**

*Mr Ralchev* reminded the members that this evaluation follows a recommendation from the European Court of Auditors (ECA) and aims to assess to which extent the EU Strategy delivered its intended objectives and check its current relevance. The proposed scope of the evaluation will focus on five criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and coherence and EU added value on the time period of 2012-2018. It will cover all EU Member States and third countries concerned by bilateral or cooperation agreements. The process will take approximately two years, starting with the publication for comments of the roadmap (already closed). Terms of reference for an external study will later be designed taking into account feedback received and will also be open to public consultation. .

*Mr Ralchev* explained that 16 of 37 comments received on the roadmap were from direct relevance. The others will be taken into account later during the consultation process. A consultation strategy will be designed, including a list of relevant stakeholders, literature research and an audit report. *Ms Ralchev* added that the Platform will allow the Commission to keep the members aware of the evaluation process.

### **2.1.6. Questions and answers (3 interventions)**

*HSI* stressed that questionnaires in public surveys are not designed for the general public. They often require technical knowledge. *HSI* wondered if the Commission will involve the Platform members, especially the NGO's to design the consultation questionnaire.

*Mr Ralchev* replied that the questionnaires are done by external contractors and validated by the Commission. Nevertheless, Mr Ralchev added that stakeholders' opinions will be welcomed.

*Eurogroup for Animals* asked the Commission if there will be an action plan for measuring and comparing the Member States compliance and remaining risks areas. This element was not in the roadmap while this point was the second recommendation made by the ECA.

*Mr Ralchev* explained that the Commission will address all the recommendations of the ECA.

*CIWF* asked if there are any elements on a next animal welfare strategy, including the timeline, and what areas might be included.

*Mr Ralchev* answered that the evaluation of the previous strategy will be the basis for future actions but at this stage it is too early to know which areas will be covered.

*Ms Bucher* emphasised the difference between the evaluation and the preparation of the next strategy. The Commission started to prepare the next steps but there is no certainty on which topics will be taken by the new Commission.

### **2.1.7. Vytenis Andriukaitis, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety – Speech**

*Commissioner Andriukaitis* highlighted the important contribution of the Platform's subgroups to the enforcement of EU legislation, and reminded Member States of their own responsibility in such topic. Commissioner also thanked the Platform's members for their engagement, in particular in the five voluntary initiatives created. He pointed out that the Platform's digital tool facilitated the progress of the Platform. Commissioner added that the contributions of members are crucial in the evaluation process of the Animal Welfare Strategy presented earlier.

Commissioner presented the Commission's future initiatives, including an ambitious two-year project on animal welfare indicators and the adoption of the first two-year programme (2019-2020) of the first EU Reference Centre for Animal Welfare. Furthermore, he announced that the Commission launched a call for interest for a second centre which will work on the welfare of poultry and other small farm animals. In addition, he reminded members that the results of the EU Coordinated Control Plan for official controls on the online sales of dogs and cats will be presented later in the day and thanked the Member States for their participation. He also underlined the Commission's continuous efforts to promote animal welfare internationally and the collaboration with the OIE. Commissioner pointed out that animal welfare was listed as one of the top EU priorities by European citizens in the online

consultation on the future of Europe and stressed the importance of such topic in the context of designing a more sustainable food policy. Furthermore, **Commissioner Andriukaitis** announced that he had proposed to extend the mandate of the Platform until 30 June 2021. He thanked all Platform's members for their commitment.

#### **2.1.8. Questions and answers (10 interventions)**

Some members (**Eurogroup for Animals, CIWF**) welcomed Commissioner's mention of the future of Europe consultation. **Eurogroup for Animals** asked what advice Commissioner will give to his/her successor and what should be his/her priorities. Commissioner replied that a good decision can only be taken after the evaluation. He indicated that had no doubt that animal welfare will be important for the next Commission and added that animal transport, international relations, export to third countries, tail docking, information to consumers and animal welfare labelling could be part of the topics of the next political agenda. Commissioner also stressed the importance of enforcement together with the involvement of all stakeholders and Member States. He cited Sweden as an example of good enforcement on animal welfare and pointed out the need for more equal dissemination of best practices between Member States. He added that new legislation is not needed, but better enforcement is.

**CIWF** asked Commissioner to share information on the ongoing citizen initiative *End the Cage Age* with the forthcoming commissioner. This initiative aims to stop the use of the cage for animals is largely supported by European citizens. **CIWF** hoped that it will have a positive response from the Commission and Member States. **CIWF** also stressed that the next Commission should place animal welfare as priority and allocated more staff for it.

**Commissioner Andriukaitis** welcomed citizen's initiatives, but outlined the insufficient European budget and difficulties to have an agreement between Member States to increase it. Concerning the ban on cages, he referred to the need for scientific opinions as the improvement of animal welfare rely on scientific and socio economic arguments and not on emotional ones. This is why the EU reference centres were created and every part of the chain should be involved in improving animal welfare.

Several members (**Sweden, EUROFAWC, FVE, EMN, COPA, AVEC**) thanked Commissioner for his personal commitment and his proposal to extend the mandate of the Platform which will allow further development of what have been already done. **EUROFAWC** also stressed the disconnection between requests for more actions and the low budget available for the European institutions. **FVE** hopes that the future Commission and the Members States will continue to put animal welfare at the forefront and will allocated sufficient resources for it. **FVE** thanked officials in SANTE for all their work and agreed that enforcement is very important. **EMN** agreed about putting more effort on enforcement.

**Commissioner Andriukaitis** stated he trusted that the Commission would be positive about the prolongation. He counts on the next Commission to keep animal welfare high on the agenda. The new European Parliament will also be favourable to this topic, reinforced by the citizens' initiatives. Unfortunately, animal welfare is not always seen as a priority by Member

States since the living conditions are not equal between them. Western countries are keener to discuss about animal welfare than Eastern, but we shall all address questions such as healthier food, climate change or antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

*COPA* stressed that the EU animal welfare reference centres are the way to work in the future with producers and NGO's on better implementation. They will allow us to avoid competitive distortion within and outside the EU. *COPA* asked the Commission to promote animal welfare in third countries and a better harmonisation inside the EU in areas not covered by the legislation, such as labelling, to avoid misinformation of consumers.

*ISAE* encouraged Member States and NGO's to invest in the scientific study of animal behaviour and welfare.

*AVEC* added that they will be glad to participate in the work of EU Reference Centres and asked how the Commission will protect the EU poultry industry against imports from third countries into the EU while upgrading the rules on animal welfare.

*EDA* asked the Commission for guidance on labelling. Indeed, final products are often made with ingredients from several origins due to increasing production costs. This situation could also impact European competitiveness when exporting to third countries. *EDA* highlighted the need for a better communication about what is already done for animal welfare in Europe.

*Commissioner Andriukaitis* referred to the complexity and sensitivity of competitiveness and the difficulties of developing countries to implement high animal welfare standards. The Commission consistently proposes to include animal welfare and AMR in the trade - agreements with third countries. Concerning the labelling issue on the country of origin, Commissioner replied that we should use a “*made in EU*” labelling rather than national ones to emphasise our European common market. We should also explore the development of new tools and technologies.

## **2.2. Morning session**

The morning session was chaired by *Ms Bucher*, Director General for Health and Food Safety.

### **2.2.1. Session 1: Enforcement – subgroups of the Platform**

#### **2.2.1.1. Ana Ramirez Vela, Head of Unit ‘Animals’, Directorate Health and Food Audits and Analysis, DG SANTE and the leaders of the working groups – Presentation of the outcome of the third meeting of the subgroup on transport**

*Ms Ramirez Vela* thanked the members and leaders of the subgroups for their engagement and their work between the meetings. She also explained that the outcomes of the subgroups will be further presented to all Platform members. *Ms Ramirez* added that the subgroups are not meant to increase the duties of the Commission and that animal welfare is a shared responsibility for all members of the chain.

**a) Joao Vieira - ‘exports of cattle’**

*Mr Vieira* reminded the composition of the working group ‘exports of cattle’ which is working on solutions and guidance for issues linked to the export of cattle to third countries. In this respect, the working group created a guide called *Organiser’s factsheet for export of cattle to non-EU countries*. This document was under consultation within the animal transport subgroup and will be presented to all Platform members once revised. *Mr Vieira* pointed out the importance of dissemination for this guide, including possible support given for its translation. The *Organiser’s factsheet* makes references to other existing documents but will not undermine them and also includes a checklist for transport supplies and documentation. *Mr Vieira* stressed the willingness of the working group to create concrete and agreed proposals to improve animal welfare and to avoid non-compliances with current legislation. They are currently working with their OIE member on a list of national contact points in third countries to manage issues during such transports.

**b) Sanna Mesman - ‘extreme temperatures’**

*Ms Mesman* presented the actions done by the working group on extreme temperatures, including making fact sheets, scenario-solution documents, research gap and advices on communication/dissemination. The group drafted fact sheets on pigs, sheep, horses, cattle and poultry based on the animal transport guides project, filling the blanks on transport and extreme temperatures. These documents will make the distinction between best practices and EU legal requirements and will be completed with the help of all animal transport members. The group also thought about an app to disseminate their work like the free *Fit for Transport* app developed by New Zealand for animal transport. The users could be transport companies, farmers, engineers, slaughterhouses’ staff, official vets, scientists and NGOs. Concerning the Scenario-solution document, it will describe real situations to help drivers and transporter with difficulties. *Ms Mesman* informed the members that the draft is available on the digital tool and that the group is also currently working on a document on dissemination.

**c) Antonio Velarde - ‘unweaned animals’**

*Mr Velarde* summarised the multidisciplinary composition of the working group on unweaned animals. The group had two meetings until now, focusing on calves of two to five weeks of age transported over long distances. Each meeting is dedicated to one of the three main problems identified for those animals: prolonged hunger, thermal comfort and health/fitness for transport. Each topic was divided in four parts: definition of the topic, search for valid animal-based measures, identification of knowledge gaps and drafting of recommendations to reduce risk factors. *Ms Velarde* explained that for the first meeting the group had to define prolonged hunger but they lacked scientific information on this subject. The second meeting focused on thermal comfort, including temperature but also humidity and the definition of thermal stress???. In September, the members will meet again to discuss fitness for transport.

**2.2.1.2. Ana Ramirez Vela, Head of Unit ‘Animals’, Directorate Health and Food Audits and Analysis, DG SANTE and Karin Olsson – subgroup coordinator - Presentation of the outcomes of the second meeting of the subgroup on the welfare of pigs**

*Karin Olsson* thanked all the members of the pig welfare subgroup. The group had two meetings and drafted four documents which assess tail damages in slaughterhouses, comparison of pain from tail biting and tail docking, tail biting risk related to compliance criteria on health and dietary factor and spacing competition between pigs. Between the meetings, these documents circulated amongst the subgroup members who all concluded that benchmark should be 100% intact tails. After the second meeting, the members decided to put forward two recommendations documents that are now circulating between members for comments as well as to distribute documents with indicators on tail biting to competent authorities of the Member States. All the subgroup members agreed that resources should be committed to develop practical validated compliance criteria for legal requirements. *Ms Olsson* also explained that the group focus on diet and spacing competition between pigs since national authorities struggle to measure it. The group will also be very happy to find synergy with the reference centre on the welfare of pigs. The recommendations of the subgroup also include the potential of using technology to measure tails scores in slaughterhouse, indicators for tail biting risks relating to compliance criteria’s on health. Once the documents will be ready, they will be shared with all Platform members and disseminated.

**2.2.1.3. Questions and answers (8 interventions)**

Several members had questions for the subgroup on animal transport (*CIWF, Eurogroup for Animals, Spain, and Denmark*). *CIWF* asked when the two remaining documents of the working group on cattle export will be delivered. *FVE*, member of the subgroup on transport, explained that the factsheets on extreme temperature in transport will not be ready for this summer and pointed out that we should all raise awareness on high temperatures and make sure that animal transportation will not be started if the temperatures are exceeding the limits. *Mr Vieira* added that for the group on export of cattle, the documents have to be substantially revised. The group hopes to advance the draft for September.

*Eurogroup for Animals* asked how the group will measure the impacts of their measures and how their factsheets will be used. *Eurogroup for Animals* pointed out that an app will be a good idea if it is translated into several languages. *Eurogroup for Animals* asked *Mr Velarde* what should come out of the working group on unweaned animals considering the large number of issues identified in transportation and the difficulties to enforce the regulation for these animals. *Eurogroup for Animals* also asked if the group considered any alternatives for transportation of unweaned animals.

*Mr Velarde* confirmed that the group is working on identifying and measuring the main welfare problems, providing scientific background, finding gaps in knowledge and promoting best practices that are not available yet.

*Denmark* asked if the group had considered to give guidance on what kind of drinking, feeding and facilities should be on board in vehicles transporting unweaned animals/calves.

*Mr Velarde* explained that the group is working with a transport company and the use of drinkers (for water) is available now, but the group is not aware of the possibilities to provide electrolytes or milk during transport.

*Spain* pointed out that there is no list of animal transporters available and asked if there is any representative of transporters in the subgroup.

*Ms Mesman* explained that they invited an international transport company to participate to their work. She added that they work on best practices rather than on enforcement.

Concerning the subgroup on pigs, *CIWF* asked the Commission which Member States have provided action plans regarding enforcement and what number will be satisfactory for the Commission. *CIWF* also questioned the Commission on what is foreseen for the Member States who didn't send any elements. *Eurogroup for Animals* asked the Commission if the action plan will continue after 2019 and if there will be infringement procedures for the Member States which not comply with the legislation.

*Ms Ramirez Vela* explained that the Commission received action plans from 26 Member States, which are divided in three groups depending on their level of compliance. The Commission checked the possibilities of infringement procedures with the legal service support.

### **2.3. Afternoon session**

The afternoon session was chaired by *Bernard Van Goethem*, Director for Crisis Management in Food, Animals and Plants, DG SANTE

#### **2.3.1. Session 2: Voluntary initiatives – Outcome of the Platform Members' own initiatives**

##### **2.3.1.1. Birte Broberg, Senior Veterinary Officer, Danish Veterinary and Food Administration – Responsible ownership and care of equidae**

*Ms Broberg* reminded the members that their key area of work includes two guides, one on horses and one on donkeys to address equines' welfare in general. The subgroup used available reports on the EU equine sector, particularly the one entitled "*removing the Blinkers*" and the Resolution of the European Parliament on responsible ownership and care of equidae.

*Ms Broberg* added that both documents present recommendations on good practices and are not addressing issues already covered by the legislation on transport or slaughter, or by the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code. The guides are designed to cover all contexts in which those animal are used. They are not meant to replace, contradict or put in question any existing guide, guideline, charter or legislation. *Ms Broberg* detailed the structure and content of the guides, including amongst others an introduction on biological needs, recommendations on accommodation and care, mutilations or end of life considerations.



She indicated that the group would like the guides to be adopted by the Platform according to Article 7 of the Commission Decision establishing the ‘Platform on Animal Welfare’. In this context, the *Guide to good animal welfare practice for the keeping, care, training and use of horses* was published for comments on the Digital Tool. The group is now taking into account the suggestions made by Platform members. **Ms Broberg** added that the group is still working on the guide on donkeys which is expected to be finalised during the next months and it could follow the same adoption procedure. The group would appreciate a possible support from the Commission for the translation and dissemination of the guides.

**2.3.1.2. Léon Arnts, Senior Policy Officer Animal Welfare, Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality; Animal Supply Chain and Animal Welfare Department – Health and welfare of pets (dogs) in trade**

**Mr Arnts** informed that due to the high interest in this topic, thirteen Member States share the nine seats available in the group (by alternating participation). He summarised the objectives of the initiative, including the exchange of good practices on enforcement and on systems of identification & registration of dogs (I&R), the development of guidelines or improving the use of the TRACES system especially for dogs. One outcome of this voluntary group is to work on a recommendation for the Commission to improve TRACES system. Indeed, the group noticed some weaknesses in the system in the case of trans-border trade of dogs and cats. The document was forwarded to the IMSOC team and uploaded on their dedicated network in the Digital Tool. One recommendation was to check the validity of registration numbers of consignments of pets. Another outcome was the mapping survey presented during the last meeting which includes information on Member States national legislation regarding the ID of pets, online sales of dogs and requirements for breeders. **Mr Arnts** showed how the documents look like, including an illustration on maps of Europe. Further outcomes expected are recommendations based on the mapping survey results focusing on supervision and improvement of EU Legislation on dogs and cats as well as the development of guidelines on transport, online sales of dogs and cats and guidance for breeders.

**2.3.1.3. Katerina Marinou, Head of the Animal Welfare for Farm and Laboratory Animals’ Division, Directorate General of Veterinary Services, Greek Ministry of Rural Development and Food – Welfare of Fish**

**Ms Marinou** detailed the work of the Greek Ministry of Rural Development and Food. She reminded the members that fish are sentient beings and can feel pain and that EU regulations require that we pay full regard to their welfare. Those are more sensitive to their environment than terrestrial animals and their immune system is much more affected by stress, but there are only few medicines and vaccines available to fish farmers. Welfare is very important in aquaculture for ensuring robust fish, and this very young industry now has the chance to develop with this principle. Taking this into account, the work of this own initiative is based on the fact that farmers, competent authorities and the public need to have updated and clear guidelines in order to be able to best ensure fish welfare. The group focus on handling and water quality as horizontal issues for all fish species and all production stages. **Ms Marinou** thanked the active members of the group. There were three meetings so far and the group works on topics where scientific data is available. The group will assess water quality and

handling in general guidelines, species parameters in species specific chapters and priorities and knowledge gaps in a final chapter. The group hopes that once it is finalised and approved by the Platform members, they will continue to work on more topics such housing and killing.

#### **2.3.1.4. Birte Broberg – Welfare of pullets**

*Ms Broberg* explained that Council Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purpose is too general to cover the complex animal welfare challenges of the rearing period of pullets and their future lives as laying hens.. This initiative aims to produce guide on best management practices for the keeping of pullets. The group is now composed by five Member States, four business organisations, two civil society organisations and the OIE as an international organisation. The guide will include an introductory part with the applicable legislation and recommendations in nine areas such as training of the staff, feeding or beak trimming. An annex will also explain some terms used in the guide.

#### **2.3.1.5. Questions and answers (9 interventions)**

*CIWF* pointed out that the fish guidelines will be very useful for the industry once finished and asked the Commission how they plan to disseminate this information to the Member States and if the Commission considered urging them to adopt these guidelines for their fishing industry.

Several members (*Germany, WHW, EUROFAWC, the Netherlands, FVE, Vier Pforten*) pointed out the valuable work done by the Platform working groups and asked the Commission to take care of the translation of the documents created into all EU languages for an efficient dissemination and as a recognition of these groups' hard work. *Vier Pforten*, stressed the need for a professional translation of the guides produced.

*Ms Broberg* thanked the Netherlands representative for the establishment of the initiative on pets and dogs in trade and looked forward to see the guidelines produced.

*Poland* wanted to correct an information presented by the voluntary initiative on pets on registration. Since polish breeders have to register to the breeders association the map on registration must be updated.

*Mr Van Goethem* replied to members that the documents produced under the Platform could be uploaded on the Commission's website. He expected also the Member States to do the same as well as other members of the Platform. He added that the translation services of the Commission are overloaded especially in our area, due to the ongoing work under the animal health law, the plant health law and the official controls. *Mr Van Goethem* invited members to initiate translations by themselves. He added that the Commission will not endorse nor approve those guidelines. However, the Platform can adopt conclusions which can be published on the Commission's website.

### **Session 3: Information and knowledge sharing**

#### **2.3.1.6. Denis Simonin, Head of Animal Welfare Sector, Unit "Animal Health and Welfare", Directorate Crisis Management in Food, Animals and Plants, DG SANTE – Results of the Commission Control Plan for the official controls on online sales of dogs and cats**

*Mr Simonin* presented the results of the Commission Control Plan for the official controls on online sales of dogs and cats. He reminded the members its objectives which included gaining insight on current practices and raising awareness on official controls. The participation was voluntary and consisted on identifying websites offering dogs and cats which can be non-compliant with EU or national legislation during a defined time period. There was a high participation rate with 18 participating countries and inspections were done in more than half of the cases. The results showed that most of the advertisements checked were about dogs (87%), published by domestic traders and lacked information both on the animals and the traders. During the inspections, the participating authorities noticed issues such as animals too young or unhealthy, animals not vaccinated nor treated, fake ID and illegal transport. Moreover, they also encountered problems to check and control the market due to the multitude of websites, legal difficulties for inspectors to access private houses, missing requirements to give contact details in the ads, or lack of information on where the animals were kept. To build a safer market, the participant countries suggested to create educational materials for citizens, guidelines for websites or an EU/national quality chart on pet ads. Furthermore, partnerships between authorities and websites and a harmonised European identification system for pet animals were also seen as possible solutions.

#### **2.3.1.7. Questions and answers (3 interventions)**

*Spain* participated to the action plan and wanted to point out that in *Spain* there is different legislation between regions. This plan allowed Member States to take common actions within and between countries. *Spain* had similar results as the one presented and worked with a websites company working in 18 Member States on applying good practices in their websites. This measure could also be applied at the European level.

*Mr Simonin* welcomed Spain's initiative and added that the presentation of the CCP was to trigger a debate among Platform members and encourage them to exchange best practices.

*The Netherlands* asked to have access to the results of the control plan to help the voluntary initiative on pet trade in their guidelines.

*Eurogroup for Animals* asked the Commission to follow up the results of this CCP by inviting pioneer Member States in this legislation or self-regulation actor such as online Platforms.

*Mr Van Goethem* reminded the members that the key of this plan was to raise awareness and that the control authorities have the tools to perform control activities also in the area of animal welfare.

### **2.3.1.8. Ana Catalán, Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Food - Spanish governmental campaign “Eres responsable”**

*Ms Catalán* presented the background and Spanish legal base for companion animals that led to the Spanish campaign *Eres responsable*.

In Spain, companion animals are under the competence of the Regions with 17 different laws on the welfare of pet animals. Following the ratification of the European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals in 2017, the legal basis for the central competent authority, Spain adopted an Action Plan on Responsible Ownership of Companion Animals (PATRAC), including legislative and non-legislative actions. *Ms Catalán* highlighted some measures taken such as an agreement on online sales between the government and the Spanish online Platforms, professional qualifications for workers of this sector and a campaign for responsible ownership of pets called “*Eres Responsable*”. This campaign was based on a guide on responsible ownership explaining what it required to own a pet, in terms of space, time or care. *Ms Catalán* informed that the guide includes where and how to buy an animal and the risks linked to buy online, but also how to train your animal to live in society. The campaign includes informative videos, infographics and educational materials, all available on the campaign website and also disseminated through pet fairs and schools. The Spanish government collaborated officially with four bodies: the national veterinary organisation, the animal health industry and a feed organisation amongst others to develop the materials.

### **2.3.1.9. David Garrahy, EU Adviser, World Animal Protection - Animal Protection Index**

*Mr Garrahy* presented the Animal Protection Index (API) which is the first tool to provide global ranking of animal protection legislation and policy at a global level. This ranking, developed by *World Animal Protection* (WAP), a global organisation that works to protect animals worldwide, includes 50 countries in the world and evaluate their level of animal protection. The main objective of the API is to put animal welfare on the agenda, but also to provide a dialogue platform for countries to improve their legislation. The methodology of this index is based on the FAO ranking of the 50 largest producers of animal products. The ranking of the API is not numerical but goes from the highest scoring (A) to the lowest (G). The countries are rated according to the level of recognition of animal protection in the country’s legislation, their accountability for animal welfare in governance structures and systems, application of the OIE animal welfare standards, presence of humane education, promotion of communication and awareness by collaborating with institutions and civil society.

The first API was published in 2014 and got many media and stakeholders’ coverage. After the publication 14 governments took direct action on the index in the first 10 months. The new Animal Protection Index will be available in 2020 and will still rank the same 50 countries with the same methodology. It will allow the countries to compare their score from the first API. Each veterinary officer of these countries will be able to see the results of the report before its release so they can give their feedback on it. There was also changes in

legislation for some countries in the five past years such as the recognition of animal's sentience in the French law. **Mr Garrahy** pointed out some of the challenges observed as the culture attitude, the lack of legislation or financial resources, expertise gap, poor enforcement mechanisms or restrictions on NGO operations. Governments use the API to identify where improvements can be made to protect animals and World Animal Protection stands ready to assist in this process.

#### **2.3.1.10. Questions and answers (3 interventions)**

**HSI** asked how World Animal Protection assess enforcement in the API. **Mr Garrahy** explained that they look at enforcement mechanisms and if the government approach to implement legislation is strong.

**Vier Pfoten** asked how Spain will disseminate the materials of the *Eres Responsable* campaign and how to assess its impact **Vier Pfoten** stressed that as the Commission, the Member States have also limited resources and that the Commission could provide templates to help. **Vier Pfoten** also highlighted that they manage the Carodog and Carocats website with the *FVE* and other organisations.

**Ms Catalan** explained that they are still in the first phase of drafting the materials and that an evaluation of the campaign will be done later. Concerning the adoption of animals instead of purchase, it is promoted in the guide with regards to the legal registered websites.

**CELCAA** asked if the scope of the API is not too wide considering that it includes farm animals, wild animals, animals in natural disasters and transport. **CELCAA** wondered how long it takes to evaluate all the criteria of the index and with which experts World Animal Protection is working with.

**WAP** replied that it takes around a year to evaluate the criteria's of the API, working with different organisations and civil society that give feedbacks on the best methodology to use. The index is about legislation and policy on animal welfare, but World Animal Protection do its best to also work on implementation but there are limitations on enforcement and how much resources countries dedicated to this topic. **Mr Garrahy** reminded that WAP is consulting the governments before publishing the index.

## **2.4. Closing**

### **2.4.1. Any other business**

**Hans Spoolder**, Senior scientist at Wageningen Livestock Research (Wageningen University & Research) and Coordinator of the first EU Reference Centre for Animal Welfare updated the members about a project initiated by the World Bank. This project, which also involves the FAO, the OIE and World Animal Net, aims to build practical guidelines for the interpretation and use of the OIE international standards in small resources countries. The first is focused on the standards for pigs and will be published this summer on the website of the

affiliated organisations. The next guidelines on working equidae will be finished next year and will be followed by one on poultry.

#### **2.4.2. Conclusion and closing of the meeting**

*Mr Van Goethem* thanked all the members for the constructive discussions and the valuable contributions. He highlighted the proposal made by the Commissioner to extend the Platform until June 2021 and the positive reactions from the members to it. It will allow to continue actions initiated so far and it will show to the new Commission how valuable the work of the Platform is. *Mr Van Goethem* pointed out that the agenda of the meeting was completed by the presentations of the subgroups and own initiatives which show the important work done by the Platform members. *Mr Van Goethem* asked to all the members to disseminate the work done under the Platform. He added that until the end of the year it will be difficult for the Commission to help, but we will try our best in the future.

In relation to the Coordinated Control Plan on the online sales of dogs and cats which was a success, this first step opens the way for the Member States to continue the work. On the two last presentations, communication is key and the experience built in Spain could be used and adapted to other Member States. *Mr Van Goethem* reminded the members that all the documents will be available on the Commission's website and encourage all to upload relevant documents on the Digital Tool. The next meeting of the Platform will be held on 7 October. *Mr Van Goethem* finally thanked all the members for their active and constructive participation.

### **3. List of Participants**

#### **European Commission:**

Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis, Marco Valletta, member of cabinet

DG SANTE: Anne Bucher, Bernard Van Goethem, Eva Zamora Escribano, Ana Ramirez Vela, Denis Simonin, Stanislav Ralchev, Kirsten Sander-Vornhagen, Aude Luyckx

**European Court of Auditors (ECA):** Kinga Wiśniewska-Danek, Head of Private Office of Mr Wojciechowski

#### **Speakers:**

Simona Popa, Senior Veterinary Officer, Romanian Veterinary and Food Administration

Stanislav Ralchev, Policy Officer, DG SANTE, European Commission

Ana Ramirez Vela, Senior Veterinary Officer, DG SANTE, European Commission

Joao Vieira, Veterinary Advisor, European Livestock and Meat Trading Union (UECBV)

Sanna Mesman, National Contact point Animal Welfare, Dutch Ministry of Agriculture; Nature and Food Quality

Antonio Velarde, Head of the Animal Welfare Unit, Research & Technology, Food & Agriculture (IRTA), Spain

Karin Olsson, Animal Welfare Officer, Department for Animal Welfare and Health, Swedish Board of Agriculture

Birte Broberg, Senior Veterinary Officer, Danish Veterinary and Food Administration

Léon Arnts, Senior Policy Officer Animal Welfare, Dutch Ministry of Agriculture

Katerina Marinou, Head of the Animal Welfare Division, Greek Ministry of Rural

Denis Simonin, Senior Veterinary Officer, DG SANTE, European Commission  
Ana Catalán, Senior Veterinary Officer, Spanish Veterinary and Food Administration  
David Garrahy, EU Adviser, World Animal Protection

**Member States:** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom

**European Economic Area (EEA) members:** Iceland, Norway

**International Organisations:** OIE, EURCAW on pigs

**Business and Professional Organisations:**

Animal Health Europe  
Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade in the EU (a.v.e.c.)  
COGECA - European Agri-Cooperatives  
COPA  
EuroCommerce - Retail, Wholesale and International Trade Representation to the EU  
European Association of Livestock Market (AEMB)  
European Community of Consumer Co-operatives (Euro Coop)  
European Dairy Association (EDA)  
European Federation of Animal Health Services (FESASS)  
European Feed Manufacturers Federation (FEFAC)  
European Forum for Animal Welfare Councils (EuroFAWC)  
European Forum of Farm Animal Breeders (EFFAB)  
European Liaison Committee for the Agricultural and Agri-Food Trade (celcaa)  
European Livestock and Meat Trades Union (U.E.C.B.V.)  
European Meat Network (EMN)  
European Rural Poultry Association (ERPA)  
Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP)  
Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE)  
International Society for Applied Ethology (ISAE)  
Liaison Centre for the Meat Processing Industry in the European Union (CLITRAVI)

**Civil Society Organisations:**

Animals' Angels  
Compassion in World Farming (CIWF)  
Eurogroup for Animals  
Humane Society International/Europe (HSI/Europe)  
Organisation for Respect and Care of Animals (ORCA)  
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)  
Slow Food  
VIER PFOTEN International (VIER PFOTEN)  
World Animal Protection (WAP)  
World Horse Welfare

**Independent Experts:** Vytautas Ribikauskas, Anna Elisabet Valros, Antonio Velarde Calvo

**Observer:** Switzerland

**Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU**