



EU Platform on Animal Welfare

Eleventh meeting

WebEx video conference

Thursday, 30 June 2022, 09.30 – 17.30 CET, Brussels time

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

– DRAFT SUMMARY REPORT –

The 11th meeting of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare provided the opportunity to inform the Platform members on the work performed by the six thematic subgroups of the Platform, established to support the revision of the EU animal welfare legislation. In addition, the Commission presented the main outcomes of the online public consultation on the fitness check and revision of the EU animal welfare legislation as well as the 'Overview report - the use of indicators for animal welfare at farm level'. Finally, EFSA provided an update on ongoing and upcoming animal welfare scientific opinions requested by the Commission in view of the upcoming revision the current legislation.

Opening by Chair Claire Bury, Deputy Director General for Food Sustainability, DG SANTE

The Chair underlined the importance of the Platform work, in particular in the six subgroups created in the context of the preparation for reviewing of the EU animal welfare legislation. The [agenda](#) and the amended Rules of Procedure were adopted.

Speech by Commissioner Stella Kyriakides ([video message](#))

Commissioner Kyriakides welcomed all members. She highlighted the Platform's new working method with the thematic subgroups, each dedicated to the revision of the specific chapter of the EU animal welfare legislation. The Commissioner underlined the involvement of the subgroups' members working around the clock to make sure that the 2023 deadline, set-up by the Farm to Fork Strategy for presenting the revised legislative proposal, will be respected. She warmly thanked the members for their hard work.

Presentation of the main outcomes of the online public consultation on the fitness check and revision of the EU animal welfare legislation [[PP](#)]

A policy officer from SANTE G5 informed that the public consultation, opened between 15 October 2021 and 21 January 2022, gathered nearly 60.000 contributions from citizens, stakeholders and public authorities. Over 90% of respondents expressed the view that current EU animal welfare legislation does not ensure adequate and uniform protection of all animal species in need.

As far as future policy options are concerned, a strong demand for the introduction of a maximum journey time for the transport of animals, specific rules for the killing of farmed fish and an EU

animal welfare label was expressed. In addition, the preference to limit the maximum transition period for phasing out the use of cages to 5 years was indicated as a preferable option.

Presentation of the 'Overview report - the use of indicators for animal welfare at farm level'

[PP]

The Head of Unit SANTE F2 'Animals' presented the above-mentioned report. The report provided inspiring thoughts on the need for a more robust system of indicators in the new legislation.

Questions & Answers

In their questions/comments on the use of animal welfare indicators, some members wondered how a baseline for such indicators will be addressed at EU level, given that the level of animal welfare differs across Member States; how the Commission will follow-up on this project and how many projects on indicators are currently underway in the Member States (*FESASS, FVE, Iceland*). *COPA* underlined the importance of animal welfare based indicators for farmers but pointed out that, to be really useful, indicators must be linked to the production process and therefore spread over time. *Slow Food* informed that several projects on indicators are underway, e.g. 'PPillow' project funded by H2020 (<https://www.ppillow.eu/>) or "Inversion" project funded by Rural Development Programme (<https://www.progettoinversion.it/>).

In its answers, *the Commission* stated that legislation constitutes the current baseline for indicators at EU level and if it is on farm, then it is a situation on farm/region. A good example is the EU eggs dashboard reflecting the laying hens' directive (eggs-dashboard_en.pdf (europa.eu)). The Commission agreed with *Copa's* opinion but pointed out that currently the use of animal-based indicators over time is only possible in high-tech farms. So-called "ice-berg" indicators (e.g. for tail docking) help to detect problems at different stages of production. The follow up of animal welfare indicators will be done in the impact assessment but also through the review of legislation, audits and dedicated networks, e.g. quality management system. The Commission also informed that there are numerous projects on indicators in the Member States, covering different types/stages of production or farming systems. Member States mainly use the indicators required by the legislation.

In relation to the public consultation, some members expressed their disagreement with the way of reporting the results of the public consultation where a vote from a citizen was considered equal to a vote from a large organisation (*COPA, EMN, ELPHA, AVEC*). *CIWF* stressed that NGOs represent millions of citizens who want the Commission to act to ensure that the EU becomes a true world leader in animal welfare.

The Commission said that the presentation was only a snapshot. In reality, the analysis are much more complex and does not equate one citizen to one organisation, as reflected in the factual summary report. In the annex to the fitness check, it will be even more visible how different views from various stakeholders were weighted and compared.

In relation to indicators, *COPA* said that there is no easy solution concerning tail biting, so prevention is very important, while *CIWF* wondered how long the Commission would take to apply the infringement procedure against the non-compliant Member States (only Finland and Sweden have enforced tail docking ban).

The Commission said the situation with the non-compliances related to the Pigs Directive clearly shows how much a reform of animal welfare legislation is needed. To date, the Commission has requested actions plans to assess Member States' efforts to achieve compliance. In addition, through a study funded by the European Parliament, knowledge will be gathered on how to automated tail lesion measurement in slaughterhouses could be used. This will simplify the reporting.

HIS pointed out the importance of a tool such as the EU eggs-dashboard to see how far Member States are from achieving free-range egg production. In relation to the revision of legislation, *HIS* wondered if there will be instruments to measure progress in animal welfare for other species, e.g. to assess to what extent Member States comply with the 28-day period for keeping pigs in individual stalls or with the use of farrowing crates.

The Commission answered that intensive work on data collection is ongoing in collaboration with EFSA, but also through the external studies currently underway. All data collected will be used to establish a common baseline scenario for the four topics addressed in the impact assessment: transport, kept animals, killing and labelling.

Introduction to the sessions dedicated to the work of the subgroups [\[PP\]](#)

The Head of Unit SANTE G5 'Animal Welfare, Antimicrobial resistance' presented the list of the thematic subgroups, which constitute the new working method of the Platform.

Subgroup on the welfare of poultry [\[PP\]](#)

A policy officer from SANTE G5, chair of the subgroup, presented the objectives and composition of the group, and its working subjects so far: 1) decrease negative impacts of selective breeding on the welfare of animals, 2) prohibition of the use of cages, 3) five domains.

Questions & Answers

- Suggestions to the subgroup to discuss the issue of confinement of birds for the production of foie gras and confinement in general (*HSI*) as well as the costs of keellbone fractures in laying hens (*EFAB*).
- Reasons for not including turkey in the scope of the subgroup (*Denmark*).
- *Spain* informed that the subgroup also checks the correctness of the terminology used in the translations of Directives 1999/74/EC and 2007/43/EC as some minor inconsistencies were found.
- *FVE*, in relation to five domains, proposed to consider including the issue of animal welfare within health checks carried out during veterinary visits provided for in the Animal Health Law.
- *COPA* wondered why despite the fact that it represents millions of people and that is among the first concerned, it does not have the possibility of voting against certain initiatives, such as the one on cages.
- *AVEC* said that 25 % of the chicken breasts consumed in the EU come from third countries without the same controls as in the EU. Therefore, it wondered how the EU will implement controls in the future. Importing without controls combined with more requirements and controls for EU poultry production would kill the sector.
- *Evangelia Sossidou* pointed out that indicators should not be developed only as species-specific indicators, but also as indicators specific to a category of animals within the same species. She

informed of a four-year project on keellbone fractures that provided valuable results and information materials available on the project website.

- *Eurogroup for Animals* expressed the opinion that some statements made at the meeting are science-based and have nothing to do with democracy or the lack thereof, while *CIWF* pointed out that anyone can launch the European Citizen's initiative on a given topic.
- *Welfarm* wondered if the subgroup discussed winter gardens for poultry.

In its responses, *the Commission* underlined that the Platform is a group of experts sharing knowledge and good practices but not adopting any legislation. As it is impossible to move forward with a Commission legislative proposal without analyses and data, the Commission collects them through external studies and EFSA opinions. This also concerns the cost of implementing certain animal welfare measures as well as import and trade issues. The data will be published in the Impact Assessment report and its annexes. Turkeys are not forgotten in this process, but the lack of an opinion from EFSA prevents the Commission from including specific proposals for this species in the 2023 proposal (opinion is expected for 2025). The subgroup is looking at the issue of confinement as it falls under the European Citizens' Initiative on cages, but not at force-feeding. The issue of health is not included for the moment in the scope of the group but it might change. One of the subgroup's meeting will be devoted to the issue of winter gardens.

Presentation of the Study on animal welfare labelling [PP]

The main objective of the study was to gather evidence that could support potential initiatives concerning animal welfare labelling in Europe. It looked into the problem definition and the state of play of the current animal welfare labelling schemes. In particular, the extent to which labelling schemes respond to consumer demand, contribute to add value to the food chain and to improving animal welfare.

Subgroup on animal welfare labelling [PP]

A policy officer from SANTE G5, chair of the subgroup, presented the composition of the group, the background of the labelling issue and its complexity as well as its different criteria investigated by the group, e.g. voluntary/mandatory label or single tier/multi-tier.

Questions & Answers

- *UECBV* informed of an upcoming national labelling scheme in Germany. It will be mandatory, starting with pigs and later extended to poultry and beef. It will be composed of five levels where the lowest would meet legal requirements and the highest would meet organic standards. An EU label in this context might create a problem for the internal market's rules.
- *Iceland* wondered if the animal welfare label will cover all stages of production process, for example for cattle, on farm producing young calves, on farm buying young animals and holding them until slaughter etc.
- *HIS* noted that when labelling certain products, e.g. fur products, there is a risk of "washing it off" by saying that animal welfare has been respected. The same is true for pig meat in view of the widespread non-compliance with the tail-docking directive. Therefore, it is important that labels do not mislead consumers. HIS wondered how the issue of processed products, e.g. from

eggs, will be resolved and pointed out that information on the country of origin is very relevant, especially in the context of importing meat from third countries. In addition, asked if the representative of associations were also interviewed within the labelling study.

- *Guido di Martino* suggested that a comprehensive animal welfare labelling system should also take into account aspects such as biosecurity or antimicrobial resistance.
- *EuroCommerce* expressed strong support for more harmonized standards closely linked to the framework for sustainable food system as labelling schemes are very important for retailers expected to guide consumers towards sustainable choices.
- For *Slow Food*, animal welfare based indicators need to be linked to the animal welfare label in order to provide consumers with real information. The “narrative” label, developed by Slow Food, intends to tell the whole story of a product (e.g. way of farming etc.).
- *COGECA* stated that higher animal welfare standards translate directly into higher animal production costs, adding to the current increase in costs due to the crisis. It is therefore difficult for EU farmers to compete with non-EU producers who do not incur high animal welfare costs. The eco schemes have not provided answers as to who will compensate for the loss of the market by EU producers.
- *FESASS* pointed out strong competition between products that respect animal welfare and conventional products. Thus, the estimate of a price must be linked to long-term production costs. Wondered, if there is any evidence that with the animal welfare label the price will be more related to production costs.
- *AVEC* expressed the opinion that an overall assessment of sustainability is necessary for a label. Otherwise, for reasons of readability, it would be impossible to include all the information on the product label.
- *Belgium* wondered whether the EU animal welfare label was intended to replace national labels.
- *Eurogroup for Animals* considered essential to integrate the animal welfare label into the sustainability criteria to allow consumers to lead their own path towards more sustainable consumption.
- For *EMN*, based on the Danish experience, a voluntary label is more efficient and secures the premium for the farmers.
- *Evangelia Sossidou* underlined that knowledge of the factors influencing consumer choice is essential for targeting information.
- *Paul Llonch Obiols* wondered for how many of the labelling schemes presented in the study, animal welfare measures are used and what is the quality of these measures.

In its replies, *the Commission* informed that it is considering a legal framework for an animal welfare labelling system. Other issues, such as processed products, biosecurity, antimicrobials, species-specific criteria or consumer information will be considered in the future and when the link between animal welfare labelling and the framework for a sustainable food system will be defined. A European label will provide a common basis and perhaps, limit the number of national labels.

ICF highlighted one of the findings that retailers are driving the schemes, they are the ones asking farmers to raise their animal welfare standards.

African swine fever in the EU: support from animal welfare organisations to raise awareness

[PP]

A policy officer from SANTE G2 informed on the origin and spread across Europe of African swine fever (ASF) as well as on key EU initiatives aiming to eradicate the disease, stressing that interventions by humans to “save” diseased boars are ineffective and highly detrimental. She asked for support from animal welfare organisations in raising awareness on ASF, which is a serious animal health problem and an issue for the pork sector.

The Director for Crisis preparedness in food, animals and plants of DG SANTE emphasized the importance of potential NGOs’ help in fighting ASF.

Questions & Answers

In their comments, some members expressed their strong support for this initiative and pointed the role hunters could play in raising awareness on ASF (*EFFAB, HIS*); the need to involve NGOs’ members (*EMN*); the importance of spreading information across society (*COPA*); the risk of infection through enrichment materials (*Guido Di Martino*) and the importance of biosecurity (*Vier Pfoten*). *Latvia* thanked the Commission for all its support in fighting ASF.

The Commission informed that for each EU country concerned by ASF, a depository containing all the information materials in the national language has been created. Hunters are actively engaged in the actions against ASF as they reduce the population of wild boars, which is the most effective way of to control the disease.

Subgroup on the welfare of pigs [PP]

A policy officer from SANTE G5, chair of the subgroup, presented the scope of the group and its working methods as well as the two subjects discussed until now: options for free farrowing and the problem of tail docking (the goal: intact tails as animal welfare in practice).

Questions & Answers

- On the possible examination of the status of tails in slaughterhouses, *UECBV* pointed out that there is no comparable system of meat inspection in slaughterhouses across Europe. Thus, it would be difficult to have comparable measures for tail docking without harmonized training for veterinarians.
- *Animal Health Europe* wondered if the proposal related to the weaning age for piglets has been discussed by the subgroup, while *EFFAB* enquired about the role of genetics to improve the problem of tail biting.
- *COPA* requested more information on the temporary confinement and expressed support for more training for farmers, including opportunities for study visits on farms. It informed of a risk for Spain to lose the Mexican market because of the meat of castrated pigs.
- *EMN* wondered if the Commission could help with a safeguard proposal on how to secure farmers who want to invest in their farms until the new legislation comes into force, but face uncertainty due to the upcoming legislative revision.

- *FVE* underlined the importance of training and exchange of best practices for veterinarians, including official veterinarians. Informed that the first subgroup prepared a document on the issue of tail-docking assessment in slaughterhouses which could be useful to the current subgroup.
- For *Guido Di Martino* some aspects of the enrichment materials should be better defined in the new legislation, while for *Paul Llonch Obiols* the benefits of better environment, including the enrichment materials are worth to be considered for improving pig welfare.
- The non-confinement is clearly beneficial for pigs in terms of their welfare, which underpinned the arguments for banning out the cages. Furthermore, stopping the surgical castration of piglets should be one of the Commission priorities (*Welfarm*).
- *Linda Keeling* wondered if the aggressive behaviour of sows is taken into consideration for a decision of temporary confinement.

In its replies, *the Commission* agreed with the opinion that tail docking measurement tools in slaughterhouses are not perfect. However, many research projects are underway and their results will improve existing instruments. The weaning age for piglets has not yet been discussed by the subgroup but could be. In addition, an EFSA opinion on pigs has just been adopted and will be taken into account. All other issues raised in the questions (e.g. genetic, environmental enrichment) to improve the tail-biting are important and will be discussed. The temporary confinement is not for all animals and is based on a risk assessment. Castration of piglets will be discussed by the subgroup at the next meeting. Aggressiveness is only one of the parameters taken into account for temporary confinement, in addition to health status and age.

Subgroup on animal welfare at the time of killing [\[PP\]](#)

A policy officer from *SANTE G5*, chair of the subgroup, presented the topics discussed until now and problems linked to each of the issues, e.g. pre-approval system for restraining and stunning equipment, prohibition of water bath stunning for poultry or requirements for farmed fish.

Questions & Answers

- *UECBV* informed that all operated slaughterhouses have been equipped with the CCTV. It allowed to detect some failures caused by workers or truck drivers. However, a couple of the CCTV had to be removed due to data protection law. Therefore, a decision is needed on how to reconcile monitoring compliance with animal welfare rules with the data protection. On electrical prods, there is no need to use it as long as a back loader system is in place.
- *Guido Di Martino* wondered whether other aspects of animal welfare at the time of killing will also be assessed, such as stocking density or lighting, as well as the question of killing in the event of depopulation.
- *Finland* informed that it is planning to propose a provision on compulsory use of CCTV in slaughterhouses as from next year (on chat).

In its reply, *the Commission* indicated that other aspects, such as lighting, are important but that, from a legislative point of view, this aspect can be dealt with by the requirements of the national competent authorities. On depopulation, a legal framework already exists, but a request for more transparency on this process could be added for example in the event of derogations.

Conclusions of the voluntary initiative on the health and welfare of pets (dogs) in trade [PP]

The Netherlands, chair of the group, presented the content of the two new documents elaborated by the group: “Supplementary guidance on socialisation of puppies” and “Supplementary guidance on socialisation of kittens” submitted for comments to the members of the Platform on the digital tool.

Questions & Answers

FEDIAF thanked for the presented documents and pointed out its work on promoting responsible pet ownership.

To the question of *Eurogroup for Animals*, the Commission answered that at the next Platform meeting, the voluntary initiative will have the opportunity to present its report on the identification and registration of dogs.

The Chair submitted the documents presented by the voluntary initiative for endorsement by the Platform. [The conclusions were adopted.](#)

The Commission informed that Eurogroup for Animals, University of Crete, Greece and CIWF covered the costs of editing and formatting the “*Guidelines on Water Quality and Handling for the Welfare of Farmed Vertebrate Fish*” translated in all EU official languages, except Gaelic, by the Commission. [All linguistic version are available on DG SANTE website.](#)

Update on activities of the voluntary initiative on responsible ownership and care of equidae [PP]

Joe Collins, chair of the initiative, informed about its current membership, achievements to date (horse guide with accompany factsheets and donkey guide, translated in several languages) and the ongoing work on donkey factsheets and the “*Guides on working equids in tourism activities*”. He stressed the importance for the group to have its work endorsed by the Platform and disseminated as largely as possible.

At the request of *FVE*, the Commission will check this possibility to use its translation tool to help with the multilingual translation of documents produced by the Platform's voluntary initiatives.

Closing of the 1st day of the meeting

Friday, 1 July 2022, 09.30 – 13.00 CET, Brussels time

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

Update from EFSA on ongoing and upcoming animal welfare scientific opinions

An EFSA policy officer informed on animal welfare mandates sent by the Commission to EFSA in the context of Farm to Fork Strategy. Following these requests, EFSA will elaborate its scientific opinions on the protection of pigs, broilers, laying hens, calves, dairy cows as well as ducks, geese and quail and on the protection of terrestrial animals on transport. He also presented the preliminary conclusions of the recently adopted scientific opinions on the protection of pigs and transport

which will be published in August and early September respectively, and then presented at a stakeholder meeting on 26 September. Finally, the speaker pointed out EFSA's commitment to the One Health approach.

Questions and Answers

- *Joe Collins* wondered if there was a scientific assessment of the different phases of transport that could cause stress, e.g. loading, as such knowledge would help to direct improvement efforts to the most stressful stages.
- *ELPHA* wanted to know if the report on transport will be released before 26 September.
- *Vier Pforten* asked if the EFSA opinion will provide details on the impact on animal welfare of low temperatures, a major stress factor. It stressed the importance of the One Health approach adopted by EFSA.
- *CIWF* asked for information on the maximum recommended journey per species and on the measurement of temperatures, while *Animals' Angels* on the transport time limit.
- *HIS* wanted to know if the EFSA opinion on pigs will provide any suggestions on possible solutions to avoid tail-docking, such as proper management or enrichment materials.
- *Greece* congratulated EFSA for the work done and stressed the importance of the complementary work of the EU Reference Centres to the process of updating the EU animal welfare legislation.

In its answers, *EFSA* informed that the main stages of transport had been assessed as well as different places to measure the temperature in a vehicle. The scientific opinion on transport will contain all the information. The report will be released before the EFSA event in September. From the time animals are engaged in transport, there are ongoing welfare consequences. Therefore, the journey should be as short as possible. Concerning tail docking, the *EFSA* opinion advises avoiding it, but also in the event that it proves necessary, provides good practices on how to do it to avoid animal suffering.

Subgroup on the welfare of calves and dairy cows [PP]

A *policy officer from SANTE G5*, chair of the subgroup, presented the background and the composition of the group as well as the topics addressed until now: 1) group housing of calves; 2) competence of stock people on dairy and calf fattening farms, training requirements; 3) calf health management.

Questions and Answers

- Members wondered if the subgroup will discuss the five domains (*Eurogroup for Animals*), duty of care (*Spain*), tie stalls (*Animals' Angels*) as well as the calf mortality link to transport and age at weaning? (*Animal Welfare Foundation*).
- Regarding the observation provided by the industry that calf welfare is better in group housing, *Paul Obiols* wanted to know if independent scientists confirmed this conclusion.
- If breeding strategies are discussed, *EFFAB* is willing to help by collecting information from the sector.

In its replies, *the Commission* informed that at present the group did not intend to discuss the five domains but that, based on the results of the discussions in the subgroup, it could be reconsidered.

Breeding strategies will be discussed at the last meeting in February 2023 and EFFAB's offer of help is welcome. Concerning the duty of care, the group plans to deal with it either through a health plan or through standard operation procedures (SOPs); the latter risks being too burdensome for the farmers. On the mortality rate at transport, the subgroup will not discuss it, it will be done by the transport subgroup. Regarding group housing of calves, EFSA will provide scientific evidence on the pros and cons of it. Tie stalls will be discussed, including a proposal for its banning.

Presentation of the Study on shifting from transport of unweaned male dairy calves over long distance to local rearing and fattening [PP]

The study analysed the problems linked with the transport of these vulnerable animals and explored existing initiatives and good practices that can be implemented to address such problems. The main conclusion of the study stipulates that there is the need to apply an integrated package to replace and reduce transport of unweaned calves and a tailor-made strategy per Member State which would include a mix of the proposed alternatives.

Study on economic models to prevent the transport of unfit end-of-career dairy cows [PP]

Transport of unfit end-of-career dairy cows is a particular area of concern in terms of dairy cow welfare. Some of them are unfit for transport to slaughterhouses, yet they are transported, in violation of the EU legislation. The study examined the extent of this illegal transport and the factors behind it and identified best practices among mitigation measures that have been put in place by the dairy industry or by competent authorities to address the problem and prevent any non-compliance.

Questions and answers

On the first presentations:

- *Joe Collins* asked if viable economic incentives could be developed to keep the end-of-career dairy cows in Ireland for fattening and if it would be accepted by consumers to buy the meat from animals grown in another country.
- *Sweden* wondered if the use of antibiotics connected to the transport was addressed by the study.
- *FESASS* pointed out that a breeder wishes to have a choice regarding the renewal of his herd and that producing only the exact number of animals expected to be needed is not a feasible option. It inquired if the study analysed the economic consequences of environmental restrictions for large farms, e.g. requirement to reduce the number of dairy cows.
- *Slow Food* wanted to know if the two studies took into account the size of farms and the type of production (e.g. extensive/intensive).
- *Vier Pforten* asked why mother-bonded calf rearing is not used to keep new born calf at least for three months at farm as this would reduce the number of transported rearing calves. In addition, why dual purpose breed is not mentioned as an alternative. Suggested to integrate the data on the on-farm slaughter into the EU statistics on farming practices.

In his answers, a *researcher* from Wageningen Research University said that, given environmental constraints and the scarcity of resources, it would be up to Ireland to decide whether to spend them on dairy production and not on fattening. Consumers have no problem accepting meat from animals fattened outside their country, but there are several aspects related to the specificity of

veal meat (e.g. cutting) making its export difficult. On the issues raised by *Vier Pforten*, the mentioned alternatives were not retained because the study had the mandate to provide solutions that could be implemented on a large scale. The majority of dairy farmers are not yet ready for the transition until three months. To integrate data on the on-farm slaughter into the EU statistics on farming practices is a good idea.

The *representative* of ICF informed that the study on shifting from transport on unweaned calves looked at the question of the size and type of farms without drawing any conclusions.

Subgroup on the protection of animals during transport [PP]

A *policy officer from SANTE G5*, co-chair of the subgroup, presented the background, composition and mandate of the group. Then, informed on the topics discussed so far: export to third countries (general issues, export by sea and by road) and limitation of journey times. Several issues still to be addressed, including the transport of unweaned and other vulnerable animals or the transport of dogs and cats.

Questions and answers

- *Vier Pforten* asked if the subgroup worked on the definition of breeding animals.
- *Animal HealthEurope* said be very pleased to see the use of the modern technologies to improve monitoring of the welfare status of animals at transport. Asked, if the group looked at the issue that sometimes the use of monitoring tools is blocked by transporters.
- *Eurogroup for Animals* asked if the subgroup could address, even at very basic level, the needs of species requiring improvement of their transport conditions but which were not listed in the inception impact assessment, e.g. aquatic species, animals used for scientific purposes or wild animals moved for rehoming purposes.
- *Guido Di Martino* wondered if small animal species, such as poultry and meat rabbits, were taken into account by the subgroup. Informed about interesting studies on the arrival mortality rate of these animals that could be a useful animal-based measure.
- *FESASS* pointed out a need to address breeding of animals, as this is an activity which includes selection.
- *Welfarm* wanted to know if the subgroup addressed the issue of the responsibility of each actor involved in the transport of animals and contingency plans for long journey.

In its replies, *the Commission* informed investigating the issue of the use of the new technology in tracking transport activities and to digitalized it, for instance in discussion with DG MOVE. On breeding, it is a horizontal issue relevant also for other legislative acts. Aquatic animals are not forgotten the Commission cannot overload EFSA with mandates. So, it will be done later on.

Denmark brought to the attention the position paper on transport, sent earlier in June by ministers from five Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden) which highlights areas of the transport regulation requiring update. Encouraged to consider the ideas in this letter for the further discussions within the subgroup.

The Commission informed that the position paper will be discussed in the Council in July.

FVE pointed out that the new technology could also be helpful for measuring the impact of existing equipment on animal welfare, e.g. air-conditioning. Suggested that the subgroup use the achievements of the *voluntary initiative on the health and welfare of pets in trade* in the area of

transport of dogs and cats. Informed that two weeks ago, the General Assembly of FVE unanimously adopted a position paper on the transport of animals.

The Commission thanked for all comments and information on the relevant studies that will be taken into account for the impact assessment.

AOB

The representative of *FAO* congratulated the animal welfare team for organizing this this very good and informative meeting. Then, proposed as from the next meeting, to have an item on the agenda on 'global' issues, in geographical and thematic terms, related to animal welfare, e.g. the environment, antimicrobial resistance or the circular economy.

The Commission preliminary agreed on this suggestion and pointed out the opportunity of using the experience of international organisations and NGOs in this context. Suggested the possibility of gathering opinions and data on these global issues outside of the Platform meeting. Stressed that the international and trade dimensions will constitute an important part of the inter-service consultation of the impact assessment.

Slow food emphasized underlined that animal welfare is part of the framework of sustainable food system.

HSI supported the *FAO* proposal and suggested setting up a working group on international aspects.

World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) noted that during these two days of meeting, members of the Platform certainly captured the flavour of animal welfare in the global context. Offered to share the results of animal welfare initiatives with an international dimension undertaken by *WOAH*.

ELPHA expressed its astonishment at the call of several members to reduce animal production in Europe while no analysis shows that the consumption of meat, milk or eggs will decrease. Therefore, the EU would have to import food produced without the high standards of animal welfare and sustainability required in Europe. Suggested to have a good discussion on realistic compromises accepted by all stakeholders involved.

The Chair suggested to interested members the creation of a voluntary initiative on the global dimension of animal welfare, stressing the right time to do so since the Commission is at the stage of collecting different opinions and data for the impact assessment which will then be used in negotiations within the Council and the European Parliament.

HSI has volunteered to lead such a voluntary initiative with *FAO* and *ELPHA* expressed the wish to be part of the group.

Conclusions and closing of the meeting

The Chair thanked everyone for their participations and the animal welfare staff for their involvement in organizing the meeting.

He informed that the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 5 and 6 December.

Annex: List of participants