



Joint CoE-EU-OIE Workshop
“Animal Welfare in Europe: achievements and future prospects”
Strasbourg, 23 and 24 November 2006

Joint Declaration on co-operation on animal welfare between the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Regional Commission for Europe of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

The representatives of the Council of Europe (Animal Welfare Unit, DG I - Legal Affairs), the European Union (European Commission and Council Presidency) and the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, jointly organising the CoE-EU-OIE Workshop “Animal Welfare in Europe: achievements and future prospects” (Strasbourg, 23-24 November 2006);

1. Recognising the importance of animal welfare and the contribution of animals to the quality of human life;
2. Bearing in mind the shared goal of the Council of Europe, the European Union and the OIE to advance animal welfare, and the complementary nature of their activities;
3. Convinced that the development of a European approach to animal welfare through the Council of Europe’s conventions and recommendations, the European Union legislation and its support for Council of Europe standards, as well as the adoption of the international animal welfare guidelines established by the OIE, provides an opportunity for further co-operation between these institutions;
4. Taking account of the need to reconcile variations arising from the different approaches of countries to animal welfare due to legal, socio-economic, political, ethical and cultural reasons;
5. Recognising the potential benefits of appropriate animal welfare standards for economic development, animal health, biodiversity and sustainable development;
6. Recognising that respect for animals and awareness of animal welfare should be an integral part of the education of citizens starting at school level;
7. Having examined methods of fostering co-operation between the Organisations in drawing up welfare rules and codes of good practices, and ways of improving knowledge and strategies to implement them, as well as OIE guidelines, at operational level;
8. Aware of the necessity to promote closer and more effective co-operation between the relevant international organisations and national entities, in particular in areas such as the elaboration of standards, scientific research, assistance and co-operation, the implementation of animal welfare guidelines, the integration of stakeholders, awareness-raising, education, training and promotion of best practices;

AGREE to the following joint Declaration:

- Agreement of the common positions on the further development of animal welfare guidelines set by the OIE should be reached.
- Development of basic legislative or practical tools to assist countries in applying Council of Europe standards and the international animal welfare guidelines established by the OIE should be coordinated;
- Identified barriers to progress in animal welfare should be recognised; the responsibilities of Veterinary Services should include the enforcement of animal welfare;
- All parties of civil society should be integrated in the process of the elaboration of animal welfare rules and codes of good practice and in their implementation at operational level;
- Special attention should be paid to increasing awareness of civil society, including consumers, about animal welfare;
- Inclusion of animal welfare courses in the curricula in undergraduate and post graduate education, as well as for academic and professional qualifications is recommended.
- Co-operation with regard to assistance to countries in providing training to official and private veterinarians, veterinary para-professionals and other persons involved in animal welfare on a professional basis should be sought.
- Plain language should be used to explain animal welfare rules and best practices to farmers, and animal handlers; the use of modern media methods is recommended;

Implementation of the measures envisaged in the present Declaration shall be carried out in accordance with relevant internal procedures of the Organisations concerned.