

Regional Animal Welfare update for Asia, Far East and Oceania for the year of 2017

The Regional Animal Welfare Strategy Advisory group to the Regional Commission was formed and finalized during 2016 after the previous RAWs Coordination Group closed in 2015. The vision for the strategy is a region where the welfare of animals is respected, promoted and incrementally advanced, simultaneously with the pursuit of progress and socioeconomic development.

Asia, the Far East and Oceania is a very diverse region with members having a range of different priorities and resources regarding animal welfare, therefore the regional strategy must be balanced to take this diversity into account.

The RAWs Action Plan was updated in 2016 and continues to give a framework for the region to promote the social and economic benefits of improving animal welfare, as well as support member country Delegates and animal welfare focal points, national and regional organisations and new or ongoing initiatives to advance animal welfare in the region.

The RAWs advisory group holds regular periodic teleconferences to update on regional and global initiatives and activities and discuss future plans and direction.

Relationship between regional and global OIE animal welfare initiatives

In December 2016, the 4th OIE Global Conference on Animal Welfare was held in Guadalajara, Mexico and included representatives from across all regions of the globe and animal sectors. One of the main objectives of the conference was to encourage and support the implementation of OIE animal welfare standards by Member Countries, with particular attention to strategies and implementation tools.

The concept of One Welfare was a focus for the conference. This idea highlights the link between animal welfare and human welfare and that they are dependent on a well-functioning ecological environment. Just as with the One Health approach, One Welfare emphasises an interdisciplinary approach to safeguarding the health and welfare of humans, animals and the environment. This can also be linked with sustainable animal production systems which promote good animal welfare and biodiversity and reduced environmental impact.

The proposed global animal welfare strategy was presented at this conference and was later adopted during the 85th General Session of the world assembly of OIE delegates in May 2017.

The global animal welfare strategy vision is a world where the welfare of animals is respected, promoted and advanced, in ways that complement the pursuit of animal health, human well-being, socioeconomic development and environmental sustainability.

The strategy recognises that animal welfare is a complex, multifaceted, international and domestic public policy issue with scientific, ethical, economic, legal, religious and cultural dimensions plus important trade policy implications.

As such, the responsibility needs to be shared between governments, communities, people who own, care for and use animals, civil society, educational institutions, veterinarians and

scientists. Mutual recognition and constructive engagement among parties is need to achieve sustained improvements to animal welfare.

There are 4 pillars in the strategy which are:

- 1) Development of animal welfare standards
- 2) Capacity building and education
- 3) Communicating with governments (including veterinary services and education institutes), organisations and the public.
- 4) Implementation of animal welfare standards and policies

The activities of the global strategy are:

- 1) Establishment of a forum that will bring together members of the animal welfare research community, the global animal welfare movement and the global animal-source food sector.
- 2) Development and implementation of science-based animal welfare standards
- 3) Encouraging and supporting the ongoing development, evolution and implementation of regional animal welfare strategies (RAWS).
- 4) Strengthening of national veterinary services
- 5) Broadening the horizons and strengthening relationships between animal welfare science and other areas of sciences

The Regional Animal Welfare Strategy for Asia Far East and Oceania is in line with the global strategy, and works to implement it in a regional context.

The membership of the RAWS Advisory Group was chosen to ensure there is geographic representation across the region with Animal Welfare Focal Points from across Asia Far East and Oceania and representatives from other key organisations in the region.

Key priorities and activities under the RAWS for 2017 reflect issues important in our region (see next section). Members also continue to progress in the key areas defined in the RAWS, in particular in the development of national strategies and legislation that supports the implementation of the OIE animal welfare standards. Selected updates are given below.

Key priorities for 2017

The key priorities of the Advisory Group for 2017 have been:

- 1) To continue to promote the implementation of OIE Standards and guidelines on Animal Welfare and the OIE Global Animal Welfare Strategy in the region, through attendance at relevant events, conferences and meetings.
- 2) To identify top priorities from the Action Plan for advancing animal welfare in the region, and associated funding (ongoing);
- 3) To establish Key Performance Indicators for reporting to the OIE (ongoing);

- 4) To support national animal welfare focal points in the region by ensuring new focal points understand their role and are well-supported by existing focal points;
- 5) To engage with national welfare focal points as well as other stakeholders to share information on achievements and activities that are occurring throughout the region to promote the improvement of animal welfare.

Selected updates showing progress under the RAWs

Several countries in the region have made legislative progress within their countries and during 2017. The People's Republic of China have drafted new standards for: *The Animal Welfare Requirement at the Slaughterhouse, Welfare on Killing of Animal for Disease Control Purposes, and Criteria for Laboratory Animal Welfare*. Bangladesh DLS have developed the "Animal Welfare Act -2017" in line with the OIE standards. In Sri Lanka a draft bill on Animal Welfare has been prepared and is under review. New Zealand has developed new regulations relating to animal transport and care, under the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

Laos PDR is developing specific regulations on animal welfare for livestock transportation, slaughter houses and farming systems.

In Australia, several states have updated and revised current regulations and acts relating to animal welfare based on new information to progress animal welfare such as for dogs in breeding and boarding facilities, companion animal breeding practices, regulations on time a pregnant sow can spend in dry sow stalls and reviews of current standards for of poultry welfare and the Australian standards for the export of livestock are underway.

In Thailand, several new regulations were introduced under Cruelty Prevention and Animal Welfare Management Act (2014) such and four more are being drafted for inclusion. A committee has also been established to implement animal welfare activities relevant to law and regulations and promote public awareness of animal welfare.

The Animal Welfare Act 2015 has been enforced in Malaysia from 1st July 2017. The Animal Welfare Board was set-up and comprises of 11 members from various government agencies to administer all aspects of animal welfare. The Board will carry the functions as set out in the Act which includes to monitor the work of the association or bodies established for the purpose of preventing animal cruelty, to monitor the place where animals are kept, promoting and educating animal welfare, licensing involving animal activities, to advise the minister on any matter relating to animal welfare, to propose and to advise the minister for drafting regulations under this Act.

Animal welfare officers have also been appointed by the minister after the commencement date of the Animal Welfare Act and these officers will conduct regulatory activities involving licensing, investigation and prosecution of any cases related to animal welfare. A total of 1,900 civil servants were appointed by the minister to enforce the provisions provided for in the Animal Welfare Act.

A total of 7 regulations under the Animal Welfare Act 2015 have been identified and the Board has agreed with this proposal. A total of 4 regulations are being reviewed by the legal advisor which includes licensing, notice of improvement and compounding offence, voluntary animal

welfare assistant and regulations for research, testing and teaching. While the other 3 regulations are being prepared which include regulations for transportation, accepted veterinary procedure and responsible animal ownership.

The Board has agreed with the proposal to develop 14 Animal Welfare Codes of Practices (COP) in various fields in animal-related activities. This COP is expected to be completed before the licensing regulation is gazetted.

There have been many initiatives across the region to promote good animal welfare and raise awareness across different animal sectors and the public.

The World Conference on Farm Animal Welfare was held in Hangzhou, an eastern city of the people's republic of China on 12th October, and Dr. Yu Kangzhen, vice minister of the Ministry of Agriculture(MOA) delivered the opening speech on animal welfare. Dr. Yu stated that promoting animal welfare has become an important choice for the green development of agriculture and a significant measure to ensure food safety and healthy consumption. The conference was hosted by FAO and CAPIAC, organised by ICCAW based in Beijing, and nearly 400 representatives from home and abroad took part in this meeting.

Iran's National Veterinary Day was held on October 06, 2017 and with it the first Veterinary Photograph and Film Festival "Baitar" was also held over 4 days. Dr. Jean Philippe Dop, Deputy Director General of OIE was in attendance.

This festival drew community awareness to the significance and impact of animal health and welfare, human and animal interaction, and relationships. A few films were broadcast and photographs presented with these themes during the festival as well as highlighted various aspects of veterinary medicine in Iran.

In Bhutan the Third Phase (2015 – 2018) of HSI project on stray dog population management and rabies control is going on. The catch, neuter, vaccinate and release (CNVR) programme is being implemented nationwide. A mass rabies vaccination campaign was launched along the border with India in February, 2016 to control an emergency outbreak of rabies and is now being monitored and controlled. Sporadic cases are still occurring, but the department of Livestock have developed a technique using tranquilizer dart guns to sedate suspected Rabies infected animals to safely capture and then humanely euthanize the animals. This method has reduced the risk to those capturing the animals as well as containing infected animals quickly without them running away and spreading infection to other areas, highlighting the one health, one welfare concept.

After the devastating earthquake in 2015 in Nepal DLS has ongoing rehabilitation programs for affected animals and in 2017 flood and landslides throughout the country required immense rescue and rehabilitation response again. Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation has supported efforts with the wildlife response and run a temporary orphanage centre for wildlife.

The Nepalese Government is also working to include animal welfare related curriculum in veterinary education in collaboration with academic institutions and also in research institutes. Rabies control program and community dog birth control program has been started from government initiatives.

Cambodia Government has implemented animal welfare standards in cattle and poultry slaughterhouses, and will soon implement in pig slaughterhouse. They are also providing training in slaughter houses on animal welfare such as handling and humane slaughter using equipment.

In New Caledonia, a working group on dog and cat welfare exists and thanks to this awareness, identification and spaying campaigns have been organized since 2014, which allow the management of almost 1500 cats and dogs. These campaigns are funded by the government of New-Caledonia, with the participation of private vets and associations, and the last one is still in progress.

A review has also been conducted on the methods of euthanasia of cats and dogs in the national pound with veterinary services and private vets. This has enabled significant improvement in the conditions and in line with the OIE standards relating to the control of stray dog population.

A public/private network has been established in Thailand with government and private associations and organisations dealing with animals, particularly pets to work together on animal welfare issues such as responsible ownership, stray dogs and cats and others.

The Thai government has also been working on training courses with poultry veterinary association to train workers in poultry sector. Other training courses for poultry, Swine and Bovine sectors was conducted by Thailand Department of Livestock development in 2017.

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) completed a module on Good Animal Husbandry Practices and Environmental Sustainability for Laying Hens, Broilers and Ducks with the support of the Centre for Animal Welfare and Ethics, University of Queensland. These were approved by Ministers and published in December 2016 <http://aadcp2.org/asean-good-animal-husbandry-practices-gahp-animal-welfare-environmental-sustainability-module-layers-broilers-ducks/>

These 'animal welfare' standards include management considerations that lend themselves to being adapted for laws/regulations, Industry Quality Assurance and Audit and use for applying the ISO Technical Specification on Animal Welfare to demonstrate compliance with OIE Welfare Standards.

World Animal Protection (WAP) has been working with several significant pig producers in Asia who are publicly committed to implementing higher pig welfare. In September 2017, a leading Thai pork producer and one of the top 20 global producers, announced that it will phase out both gestation and farrowing crates across farms they own by 2027. The commitment comes after trialling improved housing and management with World Animal Protection guidance. This allows sows to turn around, move more freely and perform their natural behaviours including nesting and mothering. They are also scaling up enrichment for growing pigs and avoiding tail docking, impacting almost a million pigs already.

Encouraged by collaboration with World Animal Protection, a vertically integrated producer in China, committed to phase out sow stalls by 2025 and additional improvements are planned for almost a million growing pigs. Another producer in China, announced that it would

introduce enriched group sow housing and welfare improvements for growing pigs including more space, effective enrichment and comfortable flooring.

World Animal Protection has been working on microchipping of bears in Hanoi, Vietnam which was completed (with 110 bears microchipped) in July 2017. This microchipping of bears, using new technology, will allow improved traceability of bears to ensure that crimes such as illegal capture of new bears from the wild and bear bile extraction are detected and actioned appropriately by the authorities.

In Republic of Korea the Government funded sterilization project of captive bears has been completed, which will see the end to captive breeding of bears, which were used mainly for bile.

The Donkey Sanctuary has been working with World Horse Welfare after they have seen an increase in demand for donkey skins which contain a product being used for a compound called ejiao which is being used in certain beauty and health product. This is a relatively new market and work is being done with industry, traders and governments to ensure regulations are in place and animal welfare standards on transport and slaughter are understood and being implemented for farmed donkeys and horses.

Professor Peter Thornber is leading a working group of experts from the International Coalition on Working Equids (The Brooke, The Donkey Sanctuary, World Horse Welfare and SPANA) to develop a toolbox of resources to assist implementing the OIE Welfare Standards on Working Equids. The approach has been to extract the issues within each of the OIE Standards/Articles and define 'management considerations' that lend themselves to regulation, education, training and inspection and audit.

Updating Global Standards

There were three ad hoc groups convened in 2016-2017 to respond to questions posed on OIE animal welfare standards. Each of the ad hoc groups were represented by regional experts from Asia, Far East and Oceania as follows:

OIE AD HOC GROUP KILLING METHODS FOR REPTILES COMMERCIALY PROCESSED FOR THEIR SKINS, MEAT AND OTHER PRODUCTS

Dr Slamet Raharjo, DVM., MP
Lecturer at Internal Department of Veterinary Faculty
University of Gadjah Mada
Jakarta, Indonesia

Dr Leisha Hewitt
Livestock Welfare
Franklin
Tasmania, AUSTRALIA

Paolo Martelli
Director Veterinary Services
Ocean Park
HONG KONG SAR, P.R CHINA

OIE AD HOC GROUP ON ANIMAL WELFARE AND PIG PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

Prof. Paul Hamilton Hemsworth
Director
Animal Welfare Science Centre
Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences
The University of Melbourne, AUSTRALIA

OIE AD HOC GROUP ON ANIMAL WELFARE AND LAYING HENS PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

Dr Tsuyoshi Shimmura
Associate Professor
Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology
Tokyo
JAPAN

Jean- Loup Rault - was working at University of Melbourne, Australia but has relocated to Europe.

The reports of all these ad hoc groups were submitted in the September meeting of the specialist commissions. There for there are **3** new animal welfare draft chapters for Member Countries to comment in this period. The reports are currently available on in English on the Delegate's website, however they should be publicly available the next weeks and comments should be submitted to OIE Headquarters by **9th January 2018**.

Planned activities for 2018

The RAWs Advisory Group has agreed some priority actions for 2018:

1. To issue the RAWs Newsletter on a regular basis, including information on training opportunities, conferences and other events that are available in the region (at least three times in 2018);
2. To survey the training available in the region, and make recommendations for focal point and other training if necessary (to begin in December 2017 and complete in June 2018);
3. To ensure focal points have information that they need to take part in the OIE's standard setting processes, including commenting on draft chapters (by Dec 2018);
4. To continue to focus on the implementation OIE standards for transport and slaughter;
5. To continue to support the collaborating centre in its work, as necessary.