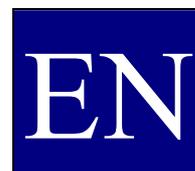




**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on a Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare

*2934th AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES Council meeting
Brussels, 23 March 2009*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"RECALLING the Protocol on Protection and Welfare of animals annexed to the Treaty establishing the European Community¹, whereby the Member States' confirmed their desire "to ensure improved protection and respect for the welfare of animals as sentient beings";

RECALLING the Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals² in which the Commission provided a clear and comprehensive map of its planned animal welfare initiatives, aiming to ensure that these initiatives take due account of "their European and international dimensions and value";

RECALLING that animal welfare was first identified as a priority in the OIE Strategic Plan 2001-2005;

RECALLING that the International Committee of the OIE has since then adopted international standards for animal welfare which recognise the need for humane treatment of sentient animals, while ensuring that these standards are science based;

¹ OJ C 340, 10.11.1997, p. 110.

² COM(2006) 13 final of 23.1.2006.

P R E S S

RECALLING that the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) recognises the importance of animal welfare practices that lead to benefits for both people and their animals and supports their implementation³;

CONSIDERING that the international community at large recognises the OIE as the international standard-setting organisation for animal welfare, and that strategic partnership is required within the framework of FAO, OIE and other relevant institutions engaged at international level to support the implementation of good animal welfare practices especially in transition and developing countries;

TAKING NOTE of the international efforts to gain world-wide support for a Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare (UDAW);

RECALLING that the International Committee of the OIE has decided to support, in principle, the development of a UDAW which calls on countries to acknowledge the importance of animal welfare and, at the same time, recognises the OIE as the established international animal welfare standard-setting body⁴;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the discussions and the results of the work carried out by the Chief Veterinary Officers;

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- DEEMS it important to achieve world-wide acceptance of animal welfare as an issue of common concern and importance;
- ENCOURAGES the Commission to continue, as announced in its Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals, "to support and initiate further international initiatives to raise awareness and create a greater consensus on animal welfare, including engaging with Developing Countries to explore trade opportunities based on welfare friendly production systems";
- INVITES the Member States and the Commission, within their respective competencies, to support, in principle, the UDAW initiative in the relevant international fora."

³ http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/home/documents/AW_Exp-meeting.pdf.

⁴ Resolution No. XIV adopted by the International Committee of the OIE on 24 May 2007.