

The implementation of animal welfare standards by Member Countries of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE): analysis of an OIE questionnaire

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Submitted for publication on: 20 May 2009

Accepted for publication on: 17 September 2009

Summary

A questionnaire on the status of animal welfare legislation and its implementation was distributed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) to 172 Member Countries in 2008. Overall, 45% of questionnaires were returned. The response rate varied from 25% in Africa to 69% in Europe. Eighty-seven percent of respondent countries indicated that there was a competent national veterinary authority for animal welfare legislation in their country. In many countries, the authority responsible for the operational implementation of animal welfare legislation appears to be the same as the authority responsible for creating the legislation. Forty-nine (66%) respondents identified a veterinary authority as being responsible for the implementation of animal welfare legislation at a state or provincial level.

Most respondent countries indicated that they had legislation covering animal transport (83%), the slaughter of animals for human consumption (91%), the killing of animals for disease control (86%) and dog control (61%). Training courses on animal welfare were available for official veterinarians, private veterinarians, producers and processors in 73%, 44%, 57% and 51% of respondent countries, respectively.

Eighty-two percent of respondent countries exported live animals to other countries and 56% of respondent countries indicated that personnel handling animals during transport were aware of OIE standards on animal welfare or other standards. Many European countries require transporters to be trained and certified according to European Union regulations.

It was mandatory to stun livestock prior to slaughter in 31% of countries, but in 57% religious exceptions were allowed, and in 8% stunning was not mandatory. The most commonly used method of stunning was mechanical but electrical stunning was also common. It was mandatory to stun livestock prior to killing for disease control in 44% of countries but it was not mandatory in 43%. There was legislation on humane killing in 74% of countries, but in 25% of countries there was no such legislation. The national veterinary authority was responsible for these regulations in most (71%) respondent countries. In 73% of respondent countries the personnel who conducted killing for disease control were generally aware of the domestic legislation for animal welfare.

Of all the problems considered, the problem of stray dog management was ranked as 'major' or 'severe' more often than any of the other issues. Killing for disease control was mentioned as a problem by one respondent, but only if services were overwhelmed. In the animal transport section of the questionnaire, long-distance transport was the major issue. Many respondents had no problems with any of these issues.

Keywords

Animal welfare – Disease control – Legislation – Questionnaire – Slaughter – Standards – Stray dogs – Transport – Veterinary Services – Welfare – World Organisation for Animal Health.

Introduction

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) held its first conference on animal welfare in Paris in 2004. This conference endorsed the OIE proposal to develop standards for specific animal welfare issues, namely: livestock transport (by land and sea), slaughter for human consumption and killing for disease control. The standards were duly developed and were adopted at the OIE General Session in 2005. The OIE's current animal welfare priorities are aquatic animal transport, stray dog control, laboratory animals, broiler chickens and wildlife welfare issues.

In 2008, the OIE held a conference in Cairo on animal welfare with the theme of 'Putting the OIE Standards to Work'. The conference brought together regulatory officials, veterinarians, researchers, stakeholders and members of non-governmental organisations who are involved in the implementation of animal welfare policies in their countries. This conference allowed discussion of the implementation of OIE standards.

In order to quantify the status of animal welfare legislation and its implementation in Member Countries a questionnaire was distributed to the OIE delegate of each country. This questionnaire also surveyed the implementation of the OIE animal welfare standards. The questionnaire (Appendix 1) used terms defined by the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* and was prepared with the assistance of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the OIE Regional Commission for South America.

Some of the questions in the questionnaire were difficult to understand and may have been ambiguous. For example, Question 5.5 asked if 'personnel who handle animals during transport' were aware of OIE animal welfare standards. It did not specify a particular type of personnel and so could have been understood to refer to labourers, animal handlers, truck drivers, local and government inspectors, or perhaps private or government

veterinarians. It is unlikely that labourers or stock handlers will be aware of the OIE, let alone its standards. Question 3.2 asked about surveys; a survey can range from asking a few individuals what they think to a full-blown national survey which is published in the refereed literature. Question 4.2 asked about veterinary schools or 'other institutions' but did not provide space to identify what type of 'other' institution was being referred to in the answer. Question 1.2 referred to 'operational implementation' of animal welfare legislation, which could have meant different things to different people. It is acknowledged that developing questions for a survey of an international, multilingual audience is difficult. It is therefore important that the desired information be adequately specified before the precise wording of the questions is finalised.

This report describes the results obtained from the survey.

Methods

The questionnaire (Appendix 1) was distributed to OIE national delegates and they were asked to return it by 31 July 2008.

The questionnaire comprised nine sets of questions about a range of topics (Box 1). These included questions about which authorities dealt with animal welfare, whether there was legislation and whether it reflected OIE standards. There were specific questions about transport and the slaughter of animals for human consumption and killing for disease control. Respondents were asked to identify the major animal welfare problems in their country and the tools required to resolve these problems. The importance of animal welfare to different sectors of the community was evaluated as was the existence of voluntary welfare schemes. The level of education regarding animal welfare was explored. Finally, respondents were asked to identify what the OIE could do for animal welfare. The questions were a mixture of types, with both closed and open answers.

Box 1**Topics covered by the questionnaire**

Authorities responsible for legislation
 Types of legislation in existence
 Voluntary schemes, stakeholder involvement
 Education, training and communication
 Livestock transport
 Slaughter for human consumption
 Killing animals for disease control
 Major welfare problems
 Future OIE activities

The data in the returned questionnaires were entered into a spreadsheet and then transferred to SPSS for numerical analysis.

Results

The results have been presented here in ten sections which equate with the nine sets of questions asked in the questionnaire plus an initial section describing the respondents. The terms 'respondents' or 'respondent countries' have been used throughout the text to emphasise the fact that all percentages given are percentages of the number of countries that responded to the questionnaire and not percentages of the total number of OIE Member Countries.

Respondents

Seventy-eight questionnaires were returned (Table 1) and all responses were used in the analysis. The overall response rate was 45% but this varied considerably between regions from 25% in Africa to 69% in Europe (Table 1). The countries which responded are listed in Box 2.

Competent authorities

Almost all respondents (67; 87%) identified a competent national veterinary authority for animal welfare legislation. This veterinary authority was usually part of a Ministry of Agriculture, Primary Production, Rural Development, Health and/or Food in one of several different formulations. Nine (9; 12%) respondents, including the European Commission, did not have a veterinary authority identified as being responsible for animal welfare legislation. In one country, there was a central commission for animal welfare.

A further 28 (36%) respondents had additional national governmental authorities which were responsible for

Table 1
Distribution of OIE Member Countries
which completed the questionnaire

OIE region	Number of Member Countries	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Africa	51	13	25
Americas	29	10	34
Asia, Far East, Oceania	28	14	50
Europe*	51	35	69
Middle East	13	6	46
Total	172	78	45

*Includes the European Commission

animal welfare legislation. These authorities varied considerably and included Ministries of Justice, Health, Finance, Industry and Primary Resources, and many others. The majority of respondents (46; 60%) did not have additional provincial or state authorities responsible for animal welfare legislation.

At a lower administrative level (provincial or state government) the authority responsible for animal welfare legislation was reported to be a veterinary authority by 33 (43%) respondents and organisations that were not veterinary authorities were noted by 37 (48%) respondents.

The authorities responsible for the operational implementation of animal welfare legislation are the same in many countries as the authorities responsible for creating the legislation. Thus, almost all respondents (69; 90%) used central national veterinary authorities to

Box 2**OIE Member Countries which completed the questionnaire**

Africa: Algeria, Botswana, Cameroon, Egypt, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Niger, Republic of Guinea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania

Americas: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay, United States of America, Venezuela

Asia, Far East and Oceania: Bhutan, Brunei, Japan, Republic of Korea, Maldives, Nepal, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Philippines, Taipei-China, Thailand, Union of Myanmar, Vanuatu, Vietnam

Europe: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Spain, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Moldavia, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Netherlands, United Kingdom

Middle East: Israel, Lebanon, Qatar, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

implement animal welfare legislation. Only six respondents (8%), including the European Commission, did not do so. Twenty-nine (38%) respondents used other non-veterinary national authorities to implement legislation. Some of these countries used only non-veterinary authorities to do so and others used them in addition to veterinary authorities. These central non-veterinary national authorities were located at Ministries of Agriculture, Local Government, Rural Affairs, Environment, Police, Justice, Interior Affairs, Health, Border Services, Food Safety, and in one case what appeared to be a non-governmental organisation.

Forty-nine (66%) respondents identified a veterinary authority as being responsible for the implementation of animal welfare legislation at a state or provincial level. Sixteen (21%) respondents identified a non-veterinary government authority as responsible for implementing animal welfare legislation at state/provincial level, and seven (9%) did not name any authority. These included police, municipal, local, provincial and regional authorities, Ministry of the Interior officials, and non-governmental organisations, like the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA).

While the majority of respondents noted that a national veterinary authority was responsible for animal welfare legislation and its implementation, a much smaller number of respondent countries used a veterinary authority to enforce the legislation at a local level. Also, only a few countries identified the police or SPCA as enforcers of animal welfare legislation, which is unusual, because the police usually have a role in implementing legislation if prosecutions are to be brought.

Many countries had only national authorities responsible for animal welfare legislation and the operational implementation of this legislation. Larger countries with federal governmental systems or devolved states tended to have local (provincial/state) authorities responsible for both the drafting of animal welfare legislation and its implementation.

Legislation

Table II provides a summary of the number of respondent countries that indicated that they had animal welfare legislation and the number of respondent countries in which the legislation reflected OIE standards. Note that non-responses to some questions meant that the total responses in each case do not necessarily add up to 78.

The majority of respondents (64; 83%) had legislation covering animal transport and for 50 of these (65%) the legislation reflected OIE standards. A few (10) respondents did not have legislation covering animal transport.

Table II
The number of countries in which animal welfare legislation existed and the number in which legislation reflected the standards of the World Organisation for Animal Health

Country status	Type of legislation			
	Transport of animals	Slaughter for human consumption	Killing for disease control	Stray dog population control
Legislation exists	64	70	66	47
Legislation reflects OIE standards	50	41	34	29
No legislation exists	10	5	7	16

The majority of respondents (70; 91%) had legislation covering the slaughter of animals for human consumption and for 41 of these (53%) the legislation reflected OIE standards. Only a few respondents (5) did not have legislation covering the slaughter of animals for human consumption.

The majority of respondents (66; 86%) had legislation covering the killing of animals for disease control and for 34 of these (44%) the legislation reflected OIE standards. Only a few respondents (7) did not have legislation covering the slaughter of animals for disease control.

The majority of respondents (47; 61%) had legislation covering stray dog population control and for 29 of these (38%) the legislation reflected OIE standards. A few (16) respondents did not have such legislation.

Some countries had legislation for all four of these welfare issues and it reflected OIE standards, but many had legislation for three of these issues or fewer and it varied considerably between countries, with some having only dog control legislation and others only legislation for slaughtering animals for human consumption. Some legislation partially reflected OIE standards, but in some cases, although there was legislation, it did not reflect OIE standards at all.

With regard to sanctions for non-compliance with animal welfare legislation, the majority of respondents (62; 81%) reported that sanctions were available, often at different levels of severity (Table III).

In some countries all three sanctions were available but in others there was no warning sanction. Some countries had legislation which met OIE standards but no sanctions of the types listed.

Most countries had legislation and in many of these countries the legislation met OIE standards. However, some did not have legislation. Many countries had several types of sanctions but fines were the most common type.

Table III
The number of countries in which sanctions were available for transgression of the different types of animal welfare legislation

Type of legislation	Type of sanction		
	Warnings	Fines	Prison sentences
Killing for disease control	31 (40%)	45 (58%)	31 (40%)
Slaughter for human consumption	36 (47%)	51 (66%)	33 (43%)
Transport of animals	37 (48%)	54 (70%)	34 (44%)

Voluntary animal welfare schemes and stakeholder participation

There were voluntary animal welfare schemes for killing animals for disease control in 23 respondent countries but in 46 countries there were no such schemes. These schemes reflected OIE standards in 17 cases. There were voluntary animal welfare schemes for slaughter for human consumption in 31 respondent countries (22 of which reflected OIE standards) but in 37 countries this type of scheme did not exist. There were voluntary animal welfare schemes for the transport of animals in 29 respondent countries (22 of which reflected OIE standards) but in 41 countries there was none. Only a few respondents filled in the comments section and it was interpreted in different ways. Some stated that the schemes covered particular industries and others that the schemes related to the enforcement of specific legal issues.

Primary producers, industry and retailers had been surveyed to ascertain their views on animal welfare in 30, 30 and 22 respondent countries, respectively. The general public (consumers) had also been surveyed in some of these countries. The European Union (EU) has carried out several surveys about animal welfare throughout Europe.

Primary producers' ranking of animal welfare was as follows: killing for disease control, 'very important' in 13 respondent countries and 'important' in 8; slaughter for human consumption, 'very important' in 13 respondent countries and 'important' in 13; and transport, 'very important' in 16 respondent countries, 'important' in 9 and 'not important' in 1.

The ranking by industry stakeholders (slaughterhouses, food processors) was as follows: killing for disease control, 'very important' in 10 respondent countries and 'important' in 11; slaughter for human consumption, 'very important' in 20 respondent countries and 'important' in 7; and transport, 'very important' in 16 respondent countries and 'important' in 10.

Retailer ranking of animal welfare was as follows: killing for disease control, 'very important' in 6 respondent

countries, 'important' in 5 and 'not important' in 3; slaughter for human consumption, 'very important' in 11 respondent countries and 'important' in 6 countries; and transport, 'very important' in 9 respondent countries, 'important' in 6 and 'not important' in 2.

Consumer ranking of animal welfare was as follows: killing for disease control, 'very important' in 13 respondent countries, 'important' in 5 and 'not important' in 1; slaughter for human consumption, 'very important' in 17 respondent countries and 'important' in 5; and transport, 'very important' in 15 respondent countries, 'important' in 6 and 'not important' in 1.

Education, training and communication

The number of respondents providing training courses on animal welfare to official veterinarians was 56 (73%). Thirty-four (44%) countries provided courses for private veterinarians, 44 (57%) provided courses for primary producers, and 39 countries (51%) provided animal welfare courses for processors. In veterinary faculties or other institutions, animal welfare training was covered as part of other subjects in 54 respondent countries, as specific courses in 40, and as post-graduate degrees in 24 respondent countries.

In 60 (78%) respondent countries the veterinary or another government authority had taken action to raise awareness of the standards set by the OIE. This had been done in a variety of ways:

- setting up working groups with official veterinarians and stakeholders (42 countries)
- holding seminars and workshops (51 countries)
- authorising transporters (35 countries)
- authorising abattoirs (31 countries)
- licensing drivers (33 countries)
- licensing slaughterers (14 countries)
- other methods (31 countries).

These other methods included workshops, materials on government websites and conferences on animal welfare issues.

The EU has used a range of methods to raise awareness of animal welfare issues. These were listed by several respondents and included contributions to several conferences and workshops and producing publications, proceedings and informative material promoting animal welfare issues and internationally recognised standards.

Non-governmental organisations had been involved in communication on animal welfare issues in 55 of the respondent countries. In some countries they were

intimately involved in the development of regulations and the dissemination of information as part of the government methodology.

Transport of live animals

The majority of respondents (63; 82%) exported live animals to other countries. The reasons for export were identified as reproduction (17 countries), fattening (3 countries) and slaughter (12 countries). The majority of respondents exported animals over 300 km (42; 55%) and fewer (12; 16%) exported over distances of less than 300 km.

Camelidae were exported by land (5 respondents), water (3) and air (4); cattle by land (45), water (17) and air (5); deer by land (2), water (1) and air (2); equidae by land (31), water (11) and air (20); goats and sheep by land (33), water (14) and air (8); pigs by land (32), water (10) and air (12); and poultry (day-old chicks) by land (31), water (5) and air (15). Other species that were exported included reindeer, rabbits, fur animals, ornamental fish, ostriches, and aquatic animals.

Some countries limited the time allowed for transport, e.g. in one country it was limited to 8 h for livestock and 12 h for poultry.

Animals transported to market were transported for less than 300 km in 44 respondent countries and more than 300 km in 10; 10 respondents did not know the answer to this question.

About half of respondents (43; 56%) answered that personnel handling animals during transport were aware of OIE standards on animal welfare or other standards. Some European countries had personnel who knew about EU standards plus OIE standards. Many European countries required transporters to be trained and certified according to EU regulations as specified by Council Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations. In some countries there were national standards with which transporters were expected to be familiar.

A majority of respondents (49; 64%) answered that personnel handling animals during transport were trained in animal handling. Training courses by different authorities were mentioned by some respondents.

The number of respondents who answered that animals were transported for slaughter over less than or more than 300 km have been indicated in Table IV. In some countries animals were transported on journeys of both less than and more than 300 km. In small countries all journeys were less than 300 km.

Table IV
Number of respondent countries reporting that animals were transported for slaughter over less than or more than 300 km

Animal species	Number of countries	
	Less than 300 km	More than 300 km
Camels	11	2
Cattle	45	11
Deer	9	0
Equidae	22	8
Pigs	39	7
Poultry	50	6
Sheep and goats	49	7

Scientific research into the effects of transport on animal welfare had been carried out in 36 (47%) respondent countries and not in 33. The types of research undertaken in individual countries included transport stress, loading and unloading stress, stress in pigs, space during transport, duration of journeys, driver behaviour, truck design, within-truck temperature differentials, horse transport, cattle transport, sea transport, dog transport, beef cattle transport, calf transport, transport of ostriches and emus, effects of transport on meat quality, and long-distance transport. Several European countries listed EU-supported research into cattle transport, temperature during transport, and satellite navigation systems for transport of animals.

Slaughter of animals for human consumption

It was mandatory to stun livestock prior to slaughter in 24 (31%) respondent countries but in 44 (57%) religious exceptions were allowed, and in 6 (8%) stunning was not mandatory. There was legislation on stunning and humane slaughter in 59 (77%) respondent countries but not in 16 (21%).

A national veterinary authority was responsible for controlling legislation on stunning before slaughter in 58 (75%) respondent countries. Other non-veterinary governmental authorities were responsible in 14 (18%) respondent countries. These authorities included Ministries (authorities) of Health, Public Health, Religious Affairs, Food Safety and Environment. No authority was named by seven (9%) respondents.

In addition, provincial or state veterinary authorities were responsible for the legislation in 38 (50%) respondent countries and a further 25 (33%) had other local governmental authorities (municipal or local authority) in control.

The most commonly used method of stunning was mechanical (Table V), but electrical stunning was also common. Free bullet was used for killing of horses and shooting was used in deer. Pithing was mentioned by one respondent, as was stunning by a blow.

Personnel working in slaughterhouses were generally aware of legislation relating to animal welfare in 54 (70%) respondent countries, whereas in 14 (18%) they were not, and 5 (7%) respondents did not know. In European countries there is a Council Directive (93/119EC) on the protection of animals during the time of slaughter or killing and personnel must know about this directive. In some countries personnel working in plants which export meat were aware of the legislation.

Research into the effectiveness of stunning had been carried out in 34 (44%) respondent countries, but not in 33 (43%), and 5 (7%) respondents did not know.

Research had been carried out into a wide range of subjects relating to captive bolt, electrical, gas and mechanical stunning as appropriate for different species and using a range of scientific techniques. Other research topics included killing day-old chicks, stunning and killing methods that accommodate religious criteria (Islamic and Jewish), the electrical stunning of foxes, goat slaughter and waterfowl slaughter. The European Food Safety Authority has adopted two scientific opinions on the animal welfare aspects of the main stunning and killing methods and has started a project to develop animal welfare risk assessment guidelines on stunning and killing.

Killing animals for disease control

It was mandatory to stun livestock prior to killing for disease control in 34 (44%) respondent countries but not in 35 (43%). There was legislation on humane killing in 57 (74%) respondent countries and not in 19 (25%).

Table V
The means of stunning used and the number of countries that used them

Animal type	Method of stunning			Other
	Mechanical	Electrical	Gas	
Camelidae	6	1		
Cattle	48	3		1
Deer	9	2		2
Equidae	37	3		
Pigs	8	16	3	
Poultry	4	24		
Sheep and goats	18	27		1

The national veterinary authority was responsible for these regulations in 55 (71%) respondent countries but not in 4 (5%). In 10 (13%) respondent countries another national authority was involved. Some of the non-veterinary authorities identified included the Food and Regulatory Authority, Ministry of Environment and Water, Ministry of Justice, and the police.

At the provincial or state level the veterinary authorities were responsible for these regulations in 36 (47%) respondent countries but not in 19 (25%), and other authorities were responsible in 7 (9%). The latter authorities varied between countries, but included the Ministry of Environment and Water, Ministry of Justice, local municipal authorities, the police, and some local food authorities.

Contingency plans for the control of notifiable diseases were available in 72 (94%) respondent countries but not in 4 (5%).

The most common method of killing livestock was mechanical and for poultry, it was gas (Table VI). Other methods included death by shooting (firearms), throat cut/exsanguination (sometimes Halal), and lethal injection, usually with pentobarbitone.

In 56 (73%) respondent countries the personnel who conducted killing for disease control were generally aware of the domestic legislation for animal welfare but in 10 (13%) they were not aware, and respondents from 3 (4%) countries did not know.

Scientific research into the effectiveness of the methods used to kill animals was carried out in 23 (30%) respondent countries but not in 44 (57%), and respondents from 8 (10%) did not know.

Research had been conducted into gas mixtures for gassing poultry, poultry house gassing with CO₂, electrical killing, percussion stunning of poultry using different equipment,

Table VI
The methods used to kill livestock and poultry for disease control and the number of countries that used them

Animal type	Method of slaughter			Other
	Mechanical	Electrical	Gas	
Camelidae	6	1		5
Cattle	44	4	1	7
Deer	24	1	1	6
Equidae	32	2	1	10
Pigs	14	24	2	3
Poultry	8	4	17	6
Sheep and goats	25	16	2	7

foam killing of poultry, captive bolt killing of sheep, and killing geese and ducks.

Major welfare problems, needs or tools

Respondents were asked to rank four animal welfare issues (Table VII) on the basis of their significance as welfare problems by indicating if they had no problems with the issue, a few problems, some problems, major problems or severe problems. Stray dog management was ranked as a major or severe problem more often than any of the other issues. However, while some respondents identified a severe stray dog problem, others reported no problem at all. Stray cats were mentioned as a problem by one respondent. Killing for disease control was mentioned as a problem by one respondent only if services were overwhelmed. Long-distance transport was a major issue within the transport of animals section. Many respondents had no problems with any of these issues.

Table VII
The severity of animal welfare problems in respondent countries: categories of severity and the number of countries in each category

For each type of problem, respondents indicated whether they experienced no problems at all, a few problems, some problems, major problems or severe problems

Type of problem	Severity of the problem				
	None	Few	Some	Major	Severe
Killing for disease control	17	24	19	10	4
Slaughter of animals	9	30	22	12	2
Transport of animals	3	23	31	14	4
Stray dog population control	11	13	20	16	11

Respondents identified the tools they would use to resolve these problems (Table VIII). Education and training were identified by most as the tools required, but all tools were considered important by many respondents. Policy-orientated and pragmatic research was considered important by several respondents. A few respondents mentioned that there was a need to do the following:

- limit transport time
- correct problems with the slaughter of some species
- update welfare legislation
- reduce the number of responsible authorities
- improve dog registration procedures
- develop education campaigns from school onwards
- provide video training in best practices
- provide training for trainers.

Table VIII
Animal welfare problems and the tools required to resolve them: the number of countries that identified each tool as necessary

Tool	Type of welfare problem			
	Killing for disease control	Slaughter	Transport of animals	Stray dog population control
Legislation	50	49	54	43
Voluntary schemes/code of practice	44	46	54	36
Education and training	62	67	68	54
Communication strategies	52	53	58	52
Strengthening Veterinary Services	58	53	51	41
Other	20	20	20	11

Future activities of the World Organisation for Animal Health

Recommendations for future OIE activities varied considerably across respondents. The majority of these were from individual respondents rather than being widely agreed recommendations.

There were five main types of recommendation, each of which is listed here.

a) Develop guidelines and standards

Some emphasised the development of guidelines and standards for issues such as stray dog control, wildlife harvesting and culling, livestock production systems, laboratory animals, farmed fish, and the slaughter of wildlife and fur-bearing (farm and wild) animals. Others included the following suggestions:

- develop measures to prevent long-distance transport
- promote OIE standards rather than consumer standards, as the latter may have no scientific basis
- set standards for devices for controlling animals in slaughterhouses and applicable to small plants
- set criteria for type and doses of anaesthetic used in culling poultry
- develop standards for the transport of companion animals.

b) Develop a formal animal welfare strategy and strategic plan to identify future priorities

c) Develop capability in the field of animal welfare and provide information

The suggestions in this area were as follows:

- develop a database of experts, a repository of information, and research centres
- publish material on animal welfare topics
- assist with scientific studies in developing countries
- support research into transport, mass depopulation, carcass disposal, gas killing/stunning
- provide financial and technical assistance to Member Countries to enable them to monitor animal welfare standards
- lobby for research funding
- strengthen Veterinary Services in the field of animal welfare
- develop a model for animal welfare legislation
- help develop legislation in countries without it
- assist in cost-benefit analysis of different methods of animal husbandry and trade.

d) Training

Suggestions here were as follows:

- provide regional workshops and training courses in OIE Member Countries for officials and others, including para-veterinary staff, on OIE standards and animal welfare
- encourage animal welfare teaching in veterinary curricula
- provide educational material appropriate for a country's needs.

e) International agreements and consultation

The following ideas were suggested:

- sensitise governments and organisations (stakeholders, professional bodies) to the importance of animal welfare
- generate agreement between OIE and welfare organisations
- provide incentives for developing countries to develop animal welfare programmes, regulations and legislation
- facilitate political commitment to animal welfare in developing countries
- get some agreement between organisations of all sorts on standards

- seek support from national and international organisations to increase awareness among OIE Member Countries of OIE standards and to implement these

- seek to make animal welfare recognised by the World Trade Organization and have it accepted as a barrier to trade

- facilitate discussions between producers and industry representatives.

Discussion

The response rate to the questionnaire was 45%, which is a good figure overall for such a survey. However, the response varied considerably between OIE regions, with respondents from 69% of European countries (including the EU) but only 25% of African countries. The results from Europe were representative of the state of animal welfare in Western Europe and the former Eastern Bloc, but many countries from what was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (categorised as Europe) did not respond. In addition, the low response rate from Africa (25%) and the Americas (34%) made it difficult to obtain a complete picture of what is happening in these regions. The poor distribution of responses suggested that in some regions many countries were still in the process of developing legislation regarding animal welfare or that their legislation did not reflect OIE standards. This was not unexpected given that the OIE standards had been only recently produced and that animal welfare legislation and its enforcement may not have had as high a priority as other legislation. Indeed, some of the respondents were from countries with no animal welfare legislation at all.

A national veterinary service was responsible for the development of animal welfare legislation in almost all respondent countries (87%) but other authorities were also responsible. The implementation of animal welfare legislation was also the responsibility of national veterinary authorities in most countries, but in some cases 'implementation' may have been understood to mean 'enforcement', because some respondents identified the police as being responsible for implementation. The word 'implementation' may have meant different things to different respondents. Some countries had regional, provincial, state or municipal authorities responsible for legislation and its enforcement.

Legislation existed in more than 90% of respondent countries in relation to the welfare of animals slaughtered for human consumption, but legislation also existed for the other three welfare issues discussed in the questionnaire (transport of animals; killing animals for disease control; stray dog control). That only these four topics were

discussed is a reflection of the OIE emphasis on these topics, but even when asked about other welfare issues few respondents identified additional problems. This is strange given that many respondents identified animal welfare issues (e.g. farmed fish, wildlife culling, fur animal slaughter, laboratory animals) which they thought the OIE should deal with in future. Some countries had no animal welfare legislation at all.

Voluntary welfare schemes for transport, slaughter and killing for disease control existed in about a third of respondent countries and in most they reflected OIE standards. Animal welfare during slaughter was ranked as the most important welfare issue, followed by transport and then killing for disease control, by most groups of people surveyed (producers, industry, retailers, consumers). Most respondents (73%) provided training for official veterinarians and 60% had taken action to raise awareness of OIE standards.

The majority of respondents (82%) exported live animals, usually by land or water. About half the respondents replied that personnel handling animals during transport were aware of some standards, either OIE or other kinds. 'Personnel handling animals' could be interpreted as veterinary overseers, truck drivers or animal handlers, and this breadth of possibilities may have influenced the replies. Indeed, in most countries it is not likely that labourers or animal handlers will have heard of the OIE, let alone its standards.

Stunning before slaughter of animals for human consumption was mandatory in 31% of respondent countries but religious exceptions were made in 57%. Most (77%) had legislation regarding humane slaughter and staff working in slaughter plants were usually aware of this legislation. Stunning before killing for disease control was mandatory in more respondent countries (44%) than was stunning before slaughter for human consumption, but the methods of killing were poorly described and included mechanical and electrical. Perhaps the question was understood to refer to methods of stunning rather than killing. What constitutes a mechanical or electrical method of killing remains unclear.

Research had been carried out into several issues, as follows: the effects of transport on animal welfare (47% of respondent countries); the effectiveness of stunning (44%); and the effectiveness of the methods used to kill animals for disease control (30%). Research had obviously been supported by the European Union, and it was obvious from the replies to the questionnaire that most research had been carried out in European, Oceanic and North American countries. This is not surprising given the public interest in animal welfare in Europe and the trade of livestock products from Oceania into European countries.

There was a wide range of suggestions for future OIE activity. There was a desire to develop more standards, provide educational material and support research. Individual respondents with particular interests used this opportunity to present their particular point of view.

Many of the questions asked in this survey could have been interpreted in several ways and this makes the evaluation of the survey answers difficult. That not all countries responded might reflect the fact that some of them did not have animal welfare legislation or that their legislation did not reflect OIE standards. However, the level of response may also have been influenced by the size of the questionnaire or it may indicate that the questions were not understood. It might be more appropriate to survey OIE delegates on specific aspects of animal welfare (e.g. transport or stunning before slaughter for meat) rather than undertake a broad-based survey of many animal welfare issues. Future surveys should be developed with the assistance of specialists who develop questionnaires for international audiences with different languages.

It is important to reiterate that the term 'respondent countries' has been used to highlight the point that all percentages given are percentages of the number of countries that responded to the questionnaire and not percentages of the total number of OIE Member Countries. All figures quoted relate only to the 45% of OIE Member Countries from which responses were received. It cannot be assumed that the 55% of countries that did not complete the questionnaire would have exhibited similar overall distributions for each question.

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La mise en œuvre des normes relatives au bien-être animal dans les Pays Membres de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale (OIE) : analyse d'un questionnaire préparé par l'OIE

K.J. Stafford & D.J. Mellor

Résumé

En 2008, l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale (OIE) a adressé à ses 172 Pays Membres un questionnaire sur la législation applicable au bien-être animal et sur sa mise en œuvre effective dans les pays. Le taux de réponse global a été de 45 %. Il a varié suivant les régions, allant de 25 % en Afrique à 69 % en Europe. Dans 87 % des pays répondants, une Autorité vétérinaire est compétente en matière de législation sur le bien-être animal. Dans un grand nombre de pays, c'est la même autorité qui est responsable de l'élaboration de cette réglementation et de sa mise en œuvre opérationnelle. Il existe une Autorité vétérinaire responsable de la mise en œuvre de cette législation au niveau des états ou des provinces dans 49 des pays répondants (66 %).

Dans la plupart des pays répondants, la législation couvre le transport (83 %), l'abattage des animaux destinés à la consommation (91 %), la mise à mort d'animaux aux fins de prophylaxie (86 %) et le contrôle des populations de chiens (61 %). Des formations sur le bien-être animal sont proposées aux vétérinaires officiels, aux vétérinaires d'exercice libéral, aux producteurs et aux transformateurs dans 73 %, 44 %, 57 % et 51 % des pays répondants, respectivement.

Au total, 82 % des pays répondants sont exportateurs d'animaux vivants. Dans 56 % des pays répondants, les personnels chargés de manipuler les animaux durant le transport connaissent les normes de l'OIE sur le bien-être animal et d'autres normes. En Europe, la plupart des pays exigent que les transporteurs soient qualifiés et certifiés conformément à la réglementation de l'Union européenne.

L'étourdissement préalable à l'abattage est obligatoire dans 31 % des pays ; l'abattage rituel constitue une exception légale dans 57 % des pays ; en revanche, l'étourdissement n'est pas obligatoire dans 8 % des pays. La pratique la plus courante est l'étourdissement mécanique, mais l'anesthésie électrique est également pratiquée. L'étourdissement avant la mise à mort aux fins de prophylaxie est obligatoire dans 44 % des pays ; en revanche, 43 % des pays répondants ne l'imposent pas. La mise à mort sans cruauté des animaux est réglementée dans 74 % des pays, mais il reste 25 % de pays où elle n'est pas réglementée. L'Autorité vétérinaire nationale est responsable de cette réglementation dans la plupart des pays répondants (71 %). Dans 73 % des pays répondants, les personnels chargés de la mise à mort des animaux à des fins de prophylaxie sont généralement informés de la législation nationale en matière de bien-être animal.

La gestion des populations de chiens errants est, de toutes les questions évoquées, celle qui est citée le plus souvent comme constituant un problème important ou grave. Un seul pays a cité la mise à mort aux fins de prophylaxie comme étant une source de problèmes, mais uniquement lorsque les services se trouvent débordés par la tâche. S'agissant du transport, c'est surtout le transport sur de longues distances qui s'avère problématique. Les autres questions abordées par le questionnaire n'ont pas été jugées problématiques.

Mots-clés

Abattage – Bien-être – Bien-être animal – Chien errant – Législation – Normes – Organisation mondiale de la santé animale – Prophylaxie – Questionnaire – Services vétérinaires – Transport.



Aplicación de las normas de bienestar animal por los Países Miembros de la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal (OIE): análisis de un cuestionario de la OIE

K.J. Stafford & D.J. Mellor

Resumen

En 2008, la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal (OIE) distribuyó entre sus 172 Países Miembros un cuestionario sobre la situación de la legislación relativa al bienestar animal y su aplicación práctica. Respondieron en total un 45% de los países. El índice de respuesta osciló entre el 25% de África y el 69% de Europa. Un 87% de los países que respondieron señalaron la existencia en el país de una autoridad nacional veterinaria competente en materia de legislación de bienestar animal. En muchos países, la autoridad responsable de aplicar esas leyes resultó ser similar al organismo encargado de promulgarlas. En 49 (un 66%) de las respuestas se indicaba una autoridad veterinaria como instancia responsable de aplicar las leyes de bienestar animal a escala estatal o provincial.

En la mayoría de las respuestas, el país afirmaba disponer de leyes que abarcaban el transporte de animales (83%), el sacrificio de animales para consumo humano (91%), el sacrificio con fines de control sanitario (86%) y el control de perros callejeros (61%). Había cursos de formación para los veterinarios públicos, los privados, los productores y las empresas de tratamiento en el 73%, el 44%, el 57% y el 51% de los países que contestaron, respectivamente.

De los países que contestaron, un 82% exportaba animales vivos a otros países, y un 56% declaró que el personal encargado de manipular a los animales durante el transporte conocía las normas de la OIE sobre bienestar animal u otra normas en la materia. Muchos países europeos exigen a los transportistas una formación y una homologación dispensadas conforme a los reglamentos de la Unión Europea.

En el 31% de los países era obligatorio aturdir a los animales antes de sacrificarlos, aunque en un 57% admitían excepciones de índole religiosa, y en un 8% no era obligatorio. El método de aturdimiento más extendido era el mecánico, aunque el eléctrico también era de uso corriente. En un 44% era obligatorio aturdir al ganado antes de todo sacrificio con fines de control sanitario, aunque en un 43% no existía tal obligación. Había leyes sobre el sacrificio con métodos compasivos en un 74% de los países, pero no las había en un 25%. La autoridad veterinaria nacional era la instancia responsable de elaborar tales normas en la mayoría (un 71%) de los países que respondieron. En un 73% el personal encargado de sacrificar a los animales solía conocer la legislación de bienestar animal del país.

De todos los problemas mencionados, el control de los perros callejeros fue calificado como "muy importante" o "grave", más a menudo que cualquiera de los otros problemas. Un país señaló que el sacrificio con fines de control sanitario constituía un problema, pero sólo cuando los servicios estaban sobrecargados de trabajo. En las preguntas referidas al transporte de animales, el principal motivo de preocupación eran los desplazamientos a larga distancia. Muchos países no señalaron problema alguno con respecto a estas cuestiones.

Palabras clave

Bienestar – Bienestar animal – Control sanitario – Cuestionario – Legislación – Normas – Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal – Perros callejeros – Sacrificio – Servicios Veterinarios – Transporte.





**2nd OIE Global Conference on Animal Welfare
 'Putting the OIE standards to work'
 Cairo, Egypt, 20-22 October 2008**

QUESTIONNAIRE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS

Country:

Name of the delegate:

Date:

1. Competence

1.1. Please identify the competent authority for animal welfare legislation:

a. **1st Administrative level (National)**

	Yes/No	Name of authority
Veterinary authority		
Other governmental authority		

b. **2nd Administrative level (Provincial/State) (if relevant)**

	Yes/No	Name of authority
Veterinary authority		
Other governmental authority		

1.2. Please identify which competent authority is responsible for the operational implementation of the animal welfare legislation:

a. **1st Administrative level (National)**

	Yes/No	Name of authority
Veterinary authority		
Other governmental authority		

b. 2nd Administrative level (Provincial/State) (if relevant)

	Yes/No	Name of authority
Veterinary authority		
Other governmental authority		

2. Legislation

2.1. Does your country have legislation (laws, regulations) covering the following elements? If yes, does it reflect OIE standards?

Please tick boxes as appropriate.

	Transport of animals	Slaughter for human consumption	Killing for disease control	Stray dog population control
Legislation exists				
Does the legislation reflect the OIE standards?				

2.2. Does your country's animal welfare legislation provide for sanctions (e.g. warnings, fines, prison sentences) in the case of non-compliance?

Yes No

If yes: Give examples of the type of sanctions that may be imposed:

	Warnings	Fines	Prison sentences
Killing for disease control			
Slaughter for human consumption			
Transport of animals			

3. Voluntary animal welfare schemes and stakeholder participation

3.1. Are there voluntary animal welfare schemes (e.g. Assurance schemes or industry codes of practice) in your country? If yes, do they reflect OIE standards?

	Yes/No	If yes, do schemes reflect OIE standards Yes/No	Comments e.g. sectors covered
Killing for disease control			
Slaughter for human consumption			
Transport of animals			

3.2. In your country, have primary producers (farmers), industry and consumers been surveyed to ascertain their views on animal welfare?

Tick boxes as appropriate.

Sector	Yes	No
Primary producers (farmers)		
Industry		
Retailers		
Others*		

* Please specify:

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3.3. If surveys have been conducted, please indicate how the sectors rate the importance of animal welfare:

a. Primary producers (farmers)

	Very important	Important	Not important
Killing for disease control			
Slaughter for human consumption			
Transport			

b. Industry (slaughterhouses, food processors)

	Very important	Important	Not important
Killing for disease control			
Slaughter for human consumption			
Transport			

c. Retailers

	Very important	Important	Not important
Killing for disease control			
Slaughter for human consumption			
Transport			

d. Consumers

	Very important	Important	Not important
Killing for disease control			
Slaughter for human consumption			
Transport			

4. Education, training and communication

4.1. Does your country provide training courses on animal welfare for official or private veterinarians, producers, processors or consumers?

Please tick boxes as appropriate.

	Yes	No
Official veterinarians		
Private veterinarians		
Primary producers (farmers)		
Processors		

4.2. What type of animal welfare training or education is provided in veterinary faculties or other institutions in your country?

Please tick boxes as appropriate.

	Yes	No
Covered as part of other subjects		
Courses or specific subjects		
Post-graduate degrees (Doctorate or Masters)		

4.3 Has the veterinary authority or another government authority in your country taken action to raise awareness of the standards of the OIE?

Yes No

Comments:

4.4. What methods have been used?

Please tick boxes as appropriate.

	Yes	No
Setting up working groups including official veterinarians and stakeholders (producers, processors, consumers, etc.)		
Holding seminars, workshops or other courses		
Authorising transporters		
Authorising abattoirs		
Licensing drivers		
Licensing slaughtermen		
Other methods**		

**** Please specify:**

4.5. Have NGOs been involved in communication on animal welfare issues and standards?

Yes No

Comments:

5. Transport of live animals

5.1. Does your country export live animals to other countries?

Yes No

5.2. If yes, exported animals are mainly used for:

- Reproduction
- Fattening
- Slaughter
- Don't know

5.3. If yes, animals that are transported for export are generally transported over distances:

Less than 300 km More than 300 km Don't know

If you answered yes: Indicate the main animal species exported and the means of transport (i.e. land, inland waterway, sea, air)

Please tick boxes as appropriate.

Species/sector exported live	Land	Inland waterway or sea	Air
Camelidae			
Cattle			
Deer			
Equidae			
Goats and sheep			
Pigs			
Poultry			
Other**			

5.4 Are animals that are transported to markets for sale generally transported over distances less than or greater than 300 km?

Less than 300 km More than 300 km Don't know

5.5 Are the personnel handling animals during transport generally aware of the OIE standards on animal welfare or comparable standards?

Yes

No

Don't know

Comments:

5.6. Are the personnel handling animals during transport trained in animal handling?

Yes

No

Don't know

5.7. Are livestock that are transported for slaughter generally transported over distances of less than or greater than 300 km?

Please tick boxes as appropriate.

Species or sector	< 300 km	>300 km
Camelidae		
Cattle		
Deer		
Equidae		
Pigs		
Poultry		
Sheep and goats		
Other**		

**** Please specify:**

5.8. Have scientific studies been conducted in your country regarding the effects of transport on animal welfare or on product quality?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please specify areas investigated:

6. Slaughter of animals for human consumption

6.1 Is it mandatory to stun livestock prior to slaughter?

Yes

Yes, except for religious reasons

No

6.2 Is there legislation on stunning and humane slaughter?

Yes

No

6.3. What authority is responsible for controlling this legislation?

a. 1st Administrative level (National)

	Yes/No	Name of authority
Veterinary authority		
Other governmental authority		

b. 2nd Administrative level (Provincial/State) (if relevant)

	Yes/No	Name of authority
Veterinary authority		
Other governmental authority		

6.4. State the most commonly used stunning method(s) for each livestock sector:

Please tick boxes as appropriate.

Sector	Mechanical	Electrical	Gas stunning	Others**
Camelidae				
Cattle				
Deer				
Equidae				
Pigs				
Poultry				
Sheep and goats				

** Please specify:

6.5 Are the personnel working in slaughterhouses generally aware of the requirements of the applicable legislation on animal welfare?

Yes No Don't know

Comments:

6.6. Have scientific studies or assessments been conducted in your country on the effectiveness of these stunning methods?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please specify areas investigated:

--

7. Killing animals for disease control

7.1 Is it mandatory to stun livestock prior to killing?

Yes

No

7.2 Is there legislation on humane killing?

Yes

No

7.3 If yes: What authority is responsible for these regulations?

a. 1st Administrative level (National)

	Yes/No	Name of authority
Veterinary authority		
Other governmental authority		

b. 2nd Administrative level (Provincial/State)

	Yes/No	Name of authority
Veterinary authority		
Other governmental authority		

7.4 Contingency planning

a. Do you have a contingency plan for control of notifiable diseases?

Yes

No

If yes

b. Does the contingency plan specify the procedures to be used when killing animals for disease control purposes?

Yes

No

7.5. State the most commonly used killing method(s) for each livestock sector: Please tick boxes as appropriate.

Sector	Mechanical	Electrical	Gas stunning	Others**
Camelidae				
Cattle				
Deer				
Equidae				
Pigs				
Poultry				
Sheep and goats				

**** Please specify:**

7.6 Are the personnel who conduct killing for disease control generally aware of the requirements of domestic legislation for animal welfare?

Yes No Don't know

Comments:

7.7. Have scientific studies or assessments been carried out in your country on the effectiveness of using these killing methods?

Yes No Don't know

Please specify areas investigated:

8. Major welfare problems, needs or tools

8.1. From the perspective of your administration, where are the major animal welfare problems likely to occur in your country?

Please tick boxes as appropriate.

Problem	None	Few	Some	Major	Severe
Killing for disease control					
...					

Slaughter of animals					
Transport of animals					
Stray dog population control					

Comments

- 8.2. From the perspective of your administration, what tools would help to resolve these problems?
Please tick boxes as appropriate.**

Tool	Killing for disease control	Slaughter	Transport of animals	Stray dog population control
Legislation				
Voluntary schemes/ code of practice				
Education and training				
Communication strategies				
Strengthening of Veterinary Services				
Others**				

**** Please specify:**

9. Future OIE activities

- 9.1. What additional work do you think the OIE should undertake in the field of animal welfare?**

Thank you for providing this information to the OIE.