

Commissioner Potocnik
Commissioner Verheugen
Commissioner Dimas
European Commission
200, rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels

Brussels, 17 October 2008
Ref. 08/161

Delay in the publication of the Commission proposal on research animals

Dear Commissioners,

We are very disturbed by the fact that more than a year after the first interservice consultation of this new proposal there is as yet no decision on the proposal for a new EU law on the protection of animals in research. Our letters on this subject (15/11/2007; joint letter EFPIA 9/09/2008; 12/09/2008;) have to date not received any reply and the lack of communication is frustrating as our member organisations are keen to learn from us what the problems are.

The image this gives from the outside is that the Commission is not really treating this as a priority. This is in sharp contrast with the Commission's commitment in the European Partnership on Alternative Approaches where it is claimed that "*the European Commission keep laboratory animal welfare high on the political agenda*" and "*there is a need for a new, more coordinated and strengthened approach to laboratory animal welfare and 3 R-approaches to animal testing (3Rs Declaration)*". Where industry has made serious efforts to invest resources, the commitment of the Commission is being seriously questioned.

Eurogroup for Animals feel that under the circumstances our position as part of the mirror group of EPAA has become problematic and the continuous delays mean that we have no other choice than to withdraw our support.

We understand that in the development of policy there is a process of achieving a compromise and we are willing to contribute constructively to such a debate. Due to the present situation, civil society, the European Parliament and all other stakeholders are being withheld the opportunity of providing input and this is against the European principles of democratic and participative policy development.

Under the circumstances we feel it is not appropriate for Eurogroup to participate in the EPAA conference next November. Meanwhile we will continue working together with the industry partners to further the development and uptake of alternatives to animal testing.

Yours sincerely,



Sonja Van Tichelen
Director

cc. Commissioner Vassiliou; Miroslav Ouzky MEP
Roth-Behrendt MEP; Magda Chlebus, EFPIA