

Five Years: 2009 – 2014

Five Political Objectives for Animals



## Make your Mark for Animals

Animals can't vote for the changes that would benefit them, but the protection of animals will be an important issue for many voters at the next European Parliamentary election. We ask that all political groups integrate our five main objectives into their policy programme for the 2009-14 Parliament:

- Improve farm animal welfare
- Reduce animal experiments
- Protect pets
- Conserve and respect wildlife
- Implement and enforce legislation

Since its earliest days, the European Parliament has been at the forefront of responding to the public's concerns and supporting meaningful political action. When it comes to animal welfare measures, voters will look to MEPs to take the lead. It is therefore vitally important that the Parliament responds positively to this challenge and continues to take a strong lead on animal protection issues.

Animal protection will once again be an issue of public concern at the forthcoming election of the European Parliament and it will be an influencing factor for many citizens when they decide how to vote.

The five points Eurogroup for Animals is urging each political group to include in its 2009 election programme are thus:

### 1 Improve Farm Animal Welfare

Because EU Citizens consume billions of animals each year, animal welfare must be at the centre of European food policy. Policies to promote better welfare should be adopted while those that are harmful to animals should be reformed. Long distance transport of live animals should be prohibited. The Common Agricultural Policy should be used to support the move to high welfare, high quality sustainable food production. Legislation to protect the welfare of all farm animals is essential, but high welfare and organic farming should also be encouraged.

### 2 Reduce Animal Experiments

The number of animal experiments has started to increase again in recent years, particularly due to biotechnology and genetic engineering. This new trend signals a failure in European policy. Recent legislative proposals have highlighted how attempting to improve safety in other fields could inadvertently lead to large increases in animal testing. Until now, much effort has gone into promoting the validation of non-animal test methods, but in parallel there must be a dramatic increase in research to replace animal tests routinely conducted to meet EU legislative requirements. The EU urgently needs to adopt a coherent action plan on animal testing in view of reducing the numbers, promoting alternatives and ensuring that new policy decisions are not counteracting the reduction strategy.

## A Coherent Legislative Approach

The Protocol on Animal Welfare adopted as part of the Amsterdam Treaty requires a full animal welfare impact assessment of each policy proposal, yet this is rarely conducted. This should be the first step towards developing a coherent legislative approach that would:

- **Assess** the consequences of each proposal
- **Implement** adopted legislation on time
- **Enforce** adopted legislation
- **Review** impact and effectiveness
- Not be undermined by international trade

## 3 Protect Pets

The protection of pets and domestic animals has remained largely outside the remit of the EU. Action is urgently needed as increased international trade has led to more animals being moved. This not only affects the welfare of the animals involved, but also increases the risk of diseases spreading to animals and humans. Another serious problem is the lack of control in the breeding and trade of puppies.

## 4 Conserve and Respect Wildlife

The EU has accepted responsibility for protecting Europe's wildlife, because effective policy making is not always achievable by individual member states. The protection of species goes beyond national borders and often calls for global international action requiring the Commission to be active in bodies such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the International Whaling Commission (IWC). The reason behind the importation of animals captured in the wild is often to avoid the expense of establishing successful breeding programmes and as a result damages local populations. These imports need to be substantially restricted on animal health, welfare and conservation grounds. Overall the EU needs to introduce stricter protection for domestic and exotic wild animals.

## 5 Implement and Enforce Legislation

It can be years before new legislation relating to animal protection is finally implemented. A disturbing trend has seen member states, industry and even the Commission itself trying to introduce further delays or simply failing to implement legislation on time or in the correct manner. When the Commission starts to do this it leads to a particular concern because it has a unique responsibility to bring member states to account for their own failures to act.

Failure to implement and enforce its legislation will always bring the EU into disrepute, but especially where the legislation was the subject of intense public debate and interest. As a democratic supervisor the European Parliament is in a unique position to monitor the Commission and member states efforts on enforcement.

Contact us if you would like to receive more detailed policy proposals:

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- 2009** Review of the Animal Experimentation Directive
- 2010** Review of the Common Agricultural Policy
- 2012** Ban on the battery cage comes into force
- 2013** Ban on the marketing of cosmetics tested on animals
- 2013** Ban on individual sow stalls