



**EUROGROUP
FOR
ANIMALS**



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Commissioner for Trade
European Commission
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Stella Kyriakides
Commissioner for Health
European Commission
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Brussels & Tokyo, 27 July 2020

**A Call to Do More for Animals in the context of the
EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (JEEPA)**

Dear Commissioner Hogan,

Dear Commissioner Kyriakides,

Eurogroup for Animals, Japan Anti-Vivisection Association (JAVA) and Animal Rights Center Japan (ARC Japan) wish to draw attention to the fact that the EU and Japan need to do more for animals in the context of the implementation of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (JEEPA).

In the EU, one out of seven European citizens considers animal welfare to be a priority for the European Union, and one out of eight declared that animal welfare was what made them proud to be European. The 2016 Eurobarometer on animal welfare revealed that 90% of EU citizens wanted the EU to do more to promote animal welfare at global level. In Japan, based on the latest findings of a study conducted by the University of Tsukuba, animal welfare is gaining traction with the public.¹

JEEPA entered into force on 1 February 2019, creating the largest “open trade zone”. This agreement also provides the EU and Japan with the possibility to set up a technical working group on animal welfare, and to adopt a working plan to define priorities in this area of cooperation (Article 18.17.2). In the context of the Trade and Sustainable Development chapter, parties shall also implement effective measures to combat illegal trade in endangered species of wild fauna, and exchange information on this topic (Article 16.6.2.b).

¹ <https://www.eubios.info/ABC4/abc4335.htm>

As of today, the EU and Japan have not made any progress in this field. We, European and Japanese organisations, call on the European Commission and Japan to set up an animal welfare working group and to adopt an ambitious working plan on the topic in the context of the implementation of JEEPA. In addition to being a dimension of sustainable development in its own right, animal welfare is also connected to the achievement of several UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a key priority to both the EU and Japan². We also call on the EU and Japan to prioritise the work on wildlife-related issues in the cooperation taking place under the Trade and Sustainable Development chapter.

Japan is an important producer of eggs and chicken meat. In 2018, it ranked sixth in the world for egg production (2.6 million tonnes) and eight for poultry meat (2.3 million tonnes). According to the Animal Protection Index established by World Animal Protection, the country has the lowest animal welfare standards among G7 countries and standards established in that field at the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) are often disregarded. The situation needs to be addressed, and the EU could share with Japan its experience in improving animal welfare standards, especially in the laying hen and broiler industry, and of the positive impact it has had on the sustainability of these sectors in Europe.

Japan is also an important market for cosmetics and several key Japanese cosmetic companies, like Shiseido, have already stopped relying on animal testing. However there is no move to ban animal testing for cosmetics by law. This topic could be at the heart of EU-Japan animal welfare cooperation, as the EU could share its experience in moving toward an animal testing free cosmetic industry.

Finally, the EU and Japan should also collaborate on topics related to wildlife. First, both the EU and Japan are important destinations for the exotic pet trade³, which has a detrimental impact on the welfare of animals and on biodiversity but also on public health as it may play a role in the spreading of zoonoses. Both parties could start a reflection process on how to decrease the negative impacts of this trade, potentially through the establishment of a “positive list” of animals that can be traded. Secondly, the EU and Japan could work together towards closing their domestic market for ivory. While many countries have closed their ivory markets following CITES recommendations adopted at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17) in 2016, the European Union and Japan still need to take action. Given recent seizures, it’s clear that Japan and the EU are still contributing to illegal ivory trade and the delay in implementing CITES recommendation is jeopardising the effort made by other countries, like China, Singapore and the US.

The recent Covid-19 pandemic has revealed the lack of resilience of our trading systems, at great costs. It also underlined the deep interlinkages between human, animal and planetary health and welfare. The spread of zoonoses is mainly caused not only by the trade in wild animals but also by the pressure on biodiversity which makes encounters between (wild and farmed) animals and humans more frequent and closer. Intensive farming contributes to this pressure as it needs massive amounts of animal feed, such as soy, to run. The next - and potentially even worse – pandemic could also easily emerge from one of these intensive farms. Farmed animals of similar genetic strains kept

² Keeling et al, Animal Welfare and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, *Front Vet Sci.*, 2019, 6: 336.

³ TRAFFIC, *Crossing the Red Line - Japan’s Exotic Pet Trade*, June 2020 (on Japan) and <https://www.eurogroupforanimals.org/what-we-do/areas-of-concern/exotic-pet-trade> (on the EU)

by the billions (trillions, if we consider fish in aquaculture) are reservoirs and pathways for diseases that can be dangerous, if not devastating, for humans and wild animals.

The EU and Japan represent together 635 million citizens, many of which believe more should be done to improve the life of animals. With political willingness and resources, mechanisms available under the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement can contribute to achieving progress for animals, which will in turn help both societies build more resilience to future crises. We therefore call on you to use such mechanisms and define an ambitious working plan for the years to come.

Animal Rights Center Japan

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Eurogroup for Animals

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