



**ANNEX TO THE MINUTES OF THE FIFE BOARD 02/24:
REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HWC
ON THE EVENT “CALL TO CARE FOR ANIMAL WELFARE”**

29th January 2024 – Brussels, Belgium

Dear Eric,
Dear Board Members,

Some updates after FIFe's participation to "Call to Care for Animal Welfare" in Brussels and meetings with EU representatives.

First, my sincere thanks for accepting our proposal of to attend this meeting: having the name of FIFe on the guests list, the only cat fancy association present, among relevant political and academic names and prominent figures, was already a recognition.

Work is underway within the EU to revise European animal welfare legislation. For now, the review of European legislation is mainly focused on outdated practices. Last month the Commission adopted an animal welfare package, which includes two very important legislative proposals: the legislative proposal on animal transport and the legislative proposal on the welfare of dogs and cats.

Following the input of the European Food Safety Authority, the first proposal aims to improve animal transport (duration, space, temperature) mostly for livestock, but will include some details for domestic animals too; the proposal also radically transforms enforcement, thanks to new technologies and direct journey data uploads in the Commission's online certification platform, TRACES, to limit fraud on import/export, with implementation of interoperational databases so as to keep track of all transponders/microchips.

This first proposal will not have an impact on our European FIFe Members and their breeders, as long as we include in our communication at least an indication on suitable transport conditions to/from a show: we know all citizens should acknowledge and follow their own national Laws, but a general welfare indication would be educational. We might develop a "guide" on how to travel with cats and include this section in the new FIFe website.

The legislative proposal on the welfare of dogs and cats is considered by Mrs Stella Kyriakides, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, a milestone in the history of EU animal welfare. Under such a proposal, robust animal welfare requirements will apply to establishments, housing and breeding dogs and cats. No indications are given yet, but all lectures were about dogs and breeding traits detrimental to health.

In addition, there will be strict requirements on the traceability of dogs and cats, making false identification and consequent illegal trafficking much more difficult. These new requirements will be implemented as important to better protect Public Health and the commercial side of animal exchange, especially as online trading in these animals' accounts for around the 60% of the market in them.

Again, our European FIFe Members and their breeders will not be heavily impacted by such a resolution, since we already include in our Rules mandatory identification of cats. Worst case scenario would be mandatory indication of microchip number in any advertisement for the sale of a kitten, mandatory identification in any online platform (microchip, pedigree number, breeder's details...).

A hypothetical third proposal, long to come, about animal welfare in the EU, would be the ban of fur: the outdated breeding and commerce of fur animals will not involve us in any of its aspects.

The very positive impression about the real state of the art in the EU has been confirmed today during the online meeting we had with member of EU parliament Mrs Sirpa Pietikainen, who confirmed that cat breeds are not on target. Moreover, in her qualified opinion, cat breeding is not an EU issue, in terms of regulations, except the mixed breeding of wild cats, again already covered and forbidden by our Rules.

EU priorities on pets are: "exotic" companion animals (tigers, snakes...); deleterious phenotypes in some dog breeds; fighting dogs.

In her view, this Parliament will not conclude the two above proposals and a realistic timeframe before the second proposal will be discussed is about two years. She is working in the direction of being an official for cats, so that we already might be in the position of having an insider in the legislative process. She gave her availability to support HWC in developing all needed strategies to communicate efficiently at EU level: we agreed on the fact that, in our respective fields, we are the experts, with the same goals, but we don't necessarily speak the same language, and she will gladly be our "translator".

HWC highly suggests arranging, in a relatively short term, a webinar for all EU Members (i.e. Presidents or their delegates), the Board and Commission members, where Mrs Pietikainen can have a debunking on the most relevant topics involved in the two proposals and answer some questions - to be sent in advance so as to allow proper presentation. Mrs Pietikainen already gave her green light; we will wait for a prompt from the Board to define and schedule.

Last but not least, I had the pleasure to introduce FIFe to Dr Andrea Gavinelli, currently in charge of the Animal Welfare Unit in the Health and Food Safety Directorate General of the European Commission, who was extremely pleased with this premiere, being the first time having to deal with the cat fancy. The Unit is responsible for the development and the coordination of animal welfare policies in the EU. Since 2001 he has been the European member of the "Working Group on Animal Welfare" of the World Animal Health Organization (OIE-Paris). He received the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) European Animal Welfare Award for outstanding service for European Animal Welfare in 2014. In my view, a person in such standing must play on our side and we should highlight such a partnership on our website and social media. I asked him if he would be interested in having a lecture at our GA in Vienna and he agreed on the fact that this would be a mutual opportunity, leaving the last word to an eventual already existing booking for the date, and we will stay connected via email.

HWC warmly recommends the Board to include Dr Gavinelli in the Seminar, or even more, with some forward thinking, we ask the Board to consider hosting the next WCC in the beginning of 2025 in one of the European countries, so to allow all of the members of FIFe HWC, our own Presidents and/or their delegates, representatives of all Cat Associations, to be included in such educational moment and again give FIFe a standing among others.

We remain available for any comment and opportunity the Board might foresee and hope for positive feedback on our next steps.

Again, my personal gratitude for supporting HWC.

Best Regards, Sara

Sara Moroni