INTERGROUP ON THE WELFARE & CONSERVATION OF ANIMALS



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# Notes of the 291st Session

## Thursday 07th February 2013, 10.00 - 11.00 hrs

## Room LOW N 3.2 – European Parliament, Brussels

Carl Schlyter MEP, as acting chairman for the first part of the meeting, went through the Chairman's notes:

- Peter Liese MEP (EPP, DE) new member of the Intergroup
- Cosmetics: At a meeting with animal welfare organisations on the 30th January, the Commissioner for health and consumer policy, Tonio Borg, confirmed that the Commission will not bring out new legislation to weaken the ban on marketing of cosmetics tested on animals.
- REACH, the EU chemicals legislation, review was published. The review concluded that while some adjustments are needed, no major overhaul is required of the REACH regulation. Their conclusions are contested by animal welfare organisations (ECEAE). The Commission's REACH review appears not to have gone far enough to acknowledge some issues.
- Motion for a Resolution on the EU strategic objectives for the 16th Conference of the Parties to CITES - plenary adopted a motion for a resolution which contains the Parliament's suggestions for the 16th Conference of the Parties to CITES.
- Rodust report on the Common Fisheries Policy was adopted. The adopted report highlights the intrinsic problems of overfishing and supports moves for a better protection of the marine environment and its ecosystems. It also states that the Common Fisheries Policy should pay full regard, where relevant, to animal health, the good treatment of animals, food and feed safety.

Carl Schlyter MEP introduced the first speaker:

## EURL ECVAM - a broader role to achieve a greater impact

*Maurice Whelan, Head of the European Union reference Laboratory on alternatives to animal testing*

- Key responsibilities of EURL ECVAM - Guide method development, Conduct validation studies, Facilitate regulatory acceptance, Promote uptake by end-users, Organisational change – joining units
- As of Oct 2012, there are 65 staff in the Systems toxicology unit which comprises of EURL ECVAM and predictive toxicology, assay validation and assay development and High throughput screening.
- Validation process – complex. New aspects include involvement of Parere (Regulatory authority) and ESTAF from the beginning and ECVAM recommendation at the end.
- Test methods submission. 52 methods submitted from 2008 – 2012. More information at: http://tsar.jrc.ec.europa.eu/
- There have been 7 validation studies, 11 test methods (Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals, skin sensitisation, eye irritation, geno tox etc)
- ICATM – international cooperation on alternative test methods. Founded in 2009 by EURL ECVAM (EU), JaCVAM (Japan), NICEATM-ICCVAM (USA), Health Canada, and KoCVAM (Republic of Korea). Recent interest from BraCVAM (Brazil) and Chinese Agencies.

- Recent acceptance of 3 new OECD Test Guidelines and 1 Guidance Document, 2 draft test guidelines going through OECD process. Peer review of 4 validation studies underway and 1 test method recommendation in preparation. Total of 16 validation studies in progress.
- EPAA: EURL ECVAM are leaders of science platform, active role on platform on regulation. EPAA consists of: 5 Commission DGs; 3 EU Agencies, 7 EU trade federations for 7 industry sectors and 35 Companies.
- International collaboration: TOX21 Consortium and MTA: IHCP and EPA-NCCT
- Collaboration Agreement between IHCP/ECVAM and NIH National Centre for Advancing Translational Sciences Computational methods (Threshold toxicological concern).
- Integrated testing strategies eg skin sensitization, EURL ECVAM led project within the OECD Hazard Assessment Task Force
- EURL ECVAM Strategy for Animal-free assessment of Skin Sensitisation– toxicological mode of action, rationally design integrated prediction systems and supporting safety decisions
- EURL ECVAM was awarded the LUSH Science Prize (£50,000) "… for 21st Century Toxicology Research .."
- Safety Assessment Ultimately Replacing Animal Testing Safety – SEURAT. Six projects, 1 coordination action, 70 institutions, 5 years, 50 MEuro, public-private partnership.
- Promoting a broader use of alternatives - EURL ECVAM Search Guide: http://bookshop.europa.eu

Dan Jorgensen introduced the second speaker:

## Focus on implementation - the key to success

*Susanna Louhimies, policy officer on the use of Animals for scientific purposes in the DG ENV, European Commission*

- Legal background: Directive 2010/63/EU entered into force in 2010, Possibility for the maintenance of existing stricter measures, Adoption of national measures by 10 Nov 2012, Directive fully applicable from 1 Jan 2013. The Commission examines the completeness as well as the correctness of transposition Com will enforce and follow-up what is happening in each of the member states.
- Transposition: Enforcement is a key priority for the Commission. The first letters of formal notice have already been sent to those MS that have not yet transposed the directive.
- Tools of the Commission to promote uniform transposition: Twice yearly National Contact Point (NCP) meetings, legal and technical questions, discussion and Expert Working Groups.
- Topics of priority:
    - *Statistical reporting*
        - legal background – Article 54
        - Commission Implementing Decision 2012/707/EU of 14 November 2012
    - *Genetically Altered animals*
    - *Severity Assessment*
        - Legal background - Article 4(3), Article 15(1) and Article 54(2)
        - Work in progress to define and develop a severity assessment framework and develop some worked examples to illustrate the severity assessment process.
    - *Education and Training*
        - legal requirement: Art 23(2)
        - objectives: Must be flexible, available and accessible, affordable and of agreed quality. It must ensure competence of staff and facilitate free movement of personnel
        - 2 expert working groups and subgroups

  - *Non-technical project summaries*
  - *Information on the Three Rs*

- Future work for discussion at Expert Working Groups
  - Project evaluation/Retrospective assessment: 19-20 March 2012
  - Education and Training III: 3-4 July 2013
  - Inspections: Nov/Dec 2013

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/home_en.htm

## Questions and debate

- Stuart Agnew (EFD, UK) Will we see the day where animals are not used?

  *There has been much success in neurosciences in vitro*

- Elisabeth Jeggle (EPP, DE): Directive, first after Lisbon? 3Rs included. Wants to urge everyone to understand the complexity and thanks com and urges MS to follow. MEPs must ask their MS. Unexpectedly Germany abstained from the vote to adopt the directive.
  Indicators are very important

  *MEPs must ask MS to support Parere network (member state representatives). MS need to contribute to funding labs working on alternatives*
  *Look into your member states if they are implementing*

- Jacqueline Foster (ECR, UK): All time you spend on working groups etc… when are you going to get somewhere. Inspections? Unannounced…how many facilities using animals in EU and process for Inspections?

  *A directive needs to be interpreted into national legislation. Directive does not say Com will do inspections, that MS will do it. There is great improvement in new directive. Transparency is increase so expecting self-compliance. Com may control the national inspections. Com will look at how the inspection system in MS is functioning*

- Accepting prize from LUSH? Is this right?

  *Judged by independent scientific committee so was deemed possible to accept award*

- International animal protection society? (Italy) Need to have funding for alternatives research. Stop vivisection is a new initiative. We feel this directive is worse than the original one.

The next Intergroup meeting will be held on Thursday 14 March from 10.00-11.00 hrs in Strasbourg and will focus on pig welfare.