

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Analysis of Major Areas of Concern for Animal Welfare in Europe

In July 1983, the Members of the European Parliament who took part in the inaugural meeting of the Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals requested that, to help them in their considerations, an analysis should be undertaken of major areas of concern for animal welfare in Europe. This task was taken on by the Eurogroup for Animal Welfare, which published the first such analysis in 1984. This review has been revised regularly and the sixth edition was published in July 1999.

The purpose of the document is to provide a guide to the main aspects of animal welfare which are, or could be, affected by European Community legislation and to suggest ways in which areas of concern might be addressed. A copy has been distributed to every member of the European Parliament.

The book is divided into seven sections which cover: farmed animals; wild animals; companion animals; animal experimentation; animals in sport, entertainment and exhibitions; animal welfare and the European Treaty system; and animal welfare and the world trade system. Within each section there is a series of essays of various length outlining particular fields of concern. For example, in the farmed animal section, in addition to pieces on particular farmed animals (eg cattle, pigs, laying hens, poultry kept for meat, farmed fish, farmed deer) there are also reviews on transport and humane slaughter. These are valuable little introductions to the issues covered and to the state of relevant European legislation, or lack of it. The format may be ideal for briefing politicians, but scientists and others who may wish to delve deeper into the subjects, and question how well various points (at times somewhat sweeping) can be substantiated, will be frustrated by the absence of references.

The compilation of this book clearly represents a great deal of work. The effort is justified – it is a useful review of, and introduction to, animal welfare issues of current concern in Europe.

Analysis of Major Areas of Concern for Animal Welfare in Europe, 6th edition. July 1999. Eurogroup for Animal Welfare. 154pp. A4 paperback. Available in English or French from the publishers, Rue Boduognat 13, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium. Price 1500 Belgian Francs/37.5 Euros.

World Zoo Organization code of ethics

On 22 October 1999, at its 54th Annual Conference, the World Zoo Organization (WZO; previously the International Union of Directors of Zoological Gardens) ratified a draft code of ethics. This lists the following eight basic principles for the guidance of all members of the WZO:

- i) to assist in achieving the conservation and survival of species must be the aim of all members of the profession. Any actions taken in relation to an individual animal, eg euthanasia or contraception, must be undertaken with this higher ideal of species survival in mind;
- ii) to promote the interests of wildlife conservation, biodiversity and animal welfare to colleagues and to society at large;
- iii) to cooperate with the wider conservation community including wildlife agencies, conservation organizations and research institutions to assist in maintaining global biodiversity;
- iv) to cooperate with governments and other appropriate bodies to improve standards of animal welfare and ensure the welfare of all animals in our care;
- v) to encourage research into, and dissemination of achievements in, biological conservation, animal husbandry, veterinary technology, architecture, exhibit design, management practices, etc;