Press release | 12.12.2012

Animal transport

MEPs push for stronger rules to ensure animal welfare but fail to clearly call for 8 hour limit

The European Parliament today adopted a report calling for EU rules on animal transport to be strengthened. The Greens welcomed the vote but expressed regret that a majority of MEPs failed to clearly back calls for an 8-hour limit on transport times. After the vote, Green animal welfare spokesperson **Bas Eickhout** (MEP, Netherlands) said:

"Today's vote sends a strong message that we need to strengthen EU rules on animal transport to give greater attention to animal welfare concerns. While this is clearly welcome, we regret the failure of a majority of MEPs to support a clear call for an 8 hour limit on animal transport times.

"Long distance transport of animals, often in poor conditions, leads to distress for the animals involved. The Greens believe current EU legislation needs to be improved, with a view to ensuring less-crowded transport conditions and better protection for wounded animals.

"Clearly the actual journey time is one of the major animal welfare issues with regard to animal transport. Limiting transport times to 8 hours in the EU would be a major step forward to this end and we regret the failure of MEPs to clearly support this call. This remains the elephant in the room and the elephant doesn't want to continue spending hours on end cooped up in a lorry. MEPs have however called for other measures aimed at reducing transport times, for example ensuring that animals are slaughtered locally. This would naturally be an important improvement."

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