Press release | 04.07.2012

Animal welfare

Transport time limit elephant in the room as EP adopts report on EU animal welfare rules

The European Parliament today adopted a report setting out recommendations for improving animal welfare across Europe. The Greens/EFA group welcomed the report but expressed regret at the failure to clearly call for a reduction in transport times for animals, one of the key issues for EU legislation. Speaking after the vote, Greens/EFA MEP **Bas Eickhout** (Netherlands) said:

“The elephant in the room during the debates on this report is the question of transport time limits, and the failure to include this core concrete proposal for improving animal welfare in the EU undermines what is an overall good report. The elephant doesn't want to spend endless hours being transported in confined conditions, with the stress and hardship this involves. Finally introducing an 8 hour transport time limit for live animals, as requested by a recent petition, should be a priority for EU legislation. The Commission should come forward with proposals to this end and the Greens will continue to push for this.

"Apart from this clear gap, the report adopted today sets out a number of good proposals for improving animal welfare in the EU.

"MEPs called for a system of early intervention to be introduced to ensure that animal welfare legislation with long transition times is implemented properly in all member states. This is particularly relevant for the ban on battery cages for poultry, which several member states continue to ignore despite having had years to prepare. The Commission would have to identify member states struggling to meet deadlines, and draw up an implementation plan with a series of legal milestones to ensure that the deadline is met."

Commenting on the report, Greens/EFA MEP **Jill Evans** (Plaid Cymru, Wales) added:

"We welcome the calls for animal welfare standards to be included in trade agreements, with equivalent standards for imports to the EU. The creation of a new EU Animal Welfare Framework Law to provide common principles and standards for welfare across the EU - such as the principle of duty of care to individual animals and ensuring the competence of animal handlers - would also be a major step forward.

"MEPs also supported our group's proposals for animal welfare labelling schemes for meat and dairy products. This would help better inform consumers on the farming methods used and impact on animal welfare and ensure they can make a choice for better animal welfare with the food products they ultimately buy."

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Responsible MEPs



Jill Evans

Member

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