## NGOs perspective on animal welfare during long distance transport by land and sea

ICFAW – International Coalition For Animal Welfare Silvia Meriggi



Multi-regional Whole Journey Scenario Workshop on Long-distance Transport by Land and Sea between Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa

7 - 9 November 2023, Tunis, Tunisia





ICFAW Members work in 150 countries worldwide, employ over 2,000 members of staff including scientists and veterinarians and have millions of supporters. We work on all the issues on which the WOAH develops guidelines and assist countries with implementing the agreed WAOH guidelines.





### **NGOs** and live export

NGOs have been documenting first-hand very long journeys, the animal suffering involved, and the problems that can occur. We often brought to light problems that were unknown.

Nevertheless, we have not limited ourselves to **calling for a ban but** have been sending reports with information and recommendations and meeting the authorities, discussing solutions.







### Three Legal Pillars for Live Export from the EU

Agriculture policies (of which live export is part) must pay full regard to the welfare of animals, according to article 13 of TFEU.

**Live export** from the EU **shall be limited** according to
whereas 5 of Reg. EC No.
1/2005.

EU animal welfare rules on animal transport must apply beyond EU borders until final destination, according to the ECJ ruling 424/13.



# Main Animal Welfare Challenges During Export and Solutions:

The EU rules on protection of animals during transport cannot be ensured outside the EU because they cannot be imposed on non-EU states.

Even often journey logs end at EU borders and do not continue.



**Revision of the EU Regulation** regarding the journey log (ongoing) + **bilateral agreements** incl. AW or national initiatives re JL (*any in place?*).



The WOAH Terrestrial Code lays down **internationally agreed provisions to continue protection outside** the EU. To date NGOs find they are **scarcely implemented** in many countries.



# Animals transported outside the EU are subjected to handling and slaughter practices that are considered illegal and cruel in the EU





Regulatory requirements similar to the Australian ESCAS (were they successful?) or bilateral agreements incl. animal welfare (any in place?).



The WOAH Terrestrial Code dictates provisions on animal welfare during handling and slaughter but to date NGOs find they are not implemented in many countries.





# The problems that already exist in the EU worsen with increasing distance and crossing borders, by land and sea

Insufficient or non-existent stables for unloading and rest

High densities

Complicated management of animals falling ill in transit, no vets available, no euthanasia

Dangerous conditions on livestock vessels

Despite temperatures exceeding 35 °C in some destination countries, vehicles without air-condition are approved.

Ships can become death traps

Difficult and limited management of water, food, bedding /manure for the animals during long journeys

Untrained operators (drivers, crew)



List of unloading facilities; contingency plans (with police contacts, rescue services, competent authorities for transit, premises for emergencies\*), treatment of sick/euthanasia on board; lower density; seasonal suspensions; AW monitor/daily log.

(Has this been feasible so far? Are there good examples?)

\* (annex 4, template in the Network Document on Checks Before Journeys when Live Animals are Destined for Export by Road)



Articles 7.3.5. + 7.3.9.

Resting points

Article 7.3.10 + 7.2.9.

Care and humane killing of sick in transit

**Article 7.2.3.** 

Presence of a veterinarian or substitute on the vessel

**Article 7.2.5 + 7.3.5.** 

Need for an emergency plan



### Irta\* and Animal Welfare Foundation produced four check lists to measure sea journey effects on animal welfare:

\*Institute of Agrfood Research and technology (<u>www.irta.cat/en/irta/</u>) based in Spain

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### 2) for clinical measures environment

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#### LIVE EXPORTS FROM THE EU BY SEA WELFARE AWF 78 EU-APPROVED LIVESTOCK CARRIERS Agricultural producers from EU Member States FATTENING FARM Loading Average age Since 2017 Cargo ships are converted to vestock carriers **Environmental Impact:** 00 the most reaching the international vessels of 30 years SYSTEMATIC PROBLEMS OF LIVE EXPORTS BY SEA CONSEQUENCES FOR ANIMAL WELFARE DURING TRANSPORT ANIMAL LIVES LOST DUE TO VESSELS ACCIDENTS o/ + 13,000 14,000 THIRST HUNGER EXHAUSTION INJURY 8 Approval of the vessels by the main EU countries BODIS DISCHARGED INTO THE SEA SPREADING DISEASES ROMANIA 47% COLD STRESS RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS 2021 2021 DEATH 2015 2019 ELBELK & SUEZ CAMAL BLOCKADE SPAIN 6% CROATIA 3% Manure disposal of live exports SLOVENIA 1% by sea from the EU in 2018: TRANSPORT BY SEA and 200,000 animals SPAIN - LIRYA: 856HM = 1586KM, AROUT 3 DAYS OF JOURNEY days. At least 1,100 asimals died. SPAIN SAUDI ARABIA: 2419NM = 4479KM, ABOUT 10 DAYS OF JOURNEY Spanish authorities 0.7 MILLION Unloading FRANCE 11% them quality flags to flags with a pooababababal portermance that are considered high or very high risk. ARRIVAL IN 3RD COUNTRIES FATTENING FARM · Inadequate unloading infrastructure **BREEDING FARM** SLAUGHTERHOUSE Inadequate handling QUARENTINE STABLES Extreme temp. temp. >35\* TRANSPORT IN 3RD COUNTRY © 2021 Terachutaband Zolich / Asimal Welfam Foundat Stop Live Exports to Third Countries!

Link video



# Borders and customs procedures are not designed and equipped for live animals, whether by road or sea

Waiting times are variable and unpredictable

No stables for unloading and handling animals in emergencies

No priority for animal transport

Borders can become death traps





### **Possible Solutions**

Official list of borders/ports with constantly updated opening times\*, indicating presence of unloading facilities + priority.

\*(annex 3, template in the Network Document on Checks Before Journeys when Live Animals are Destined for Export by Road).



#### Chapter 5.6

Border posts should be organized and equipped for the animal trade and have the facilities for watering and feeding. Each country should have a list of border posts.

#### **Article 7.2.10**

For sea exports, priority and immediate unloading at port facilities

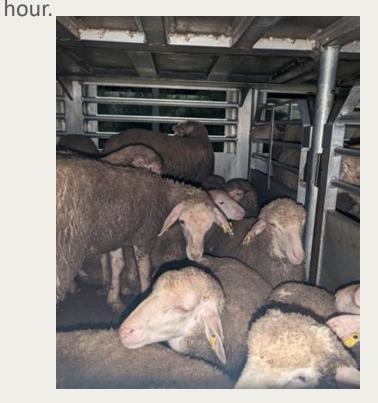




### Unpredictable waiting times at borders documented by NGOs:

**Example:** In November 2021, German pregnant heifers remained on board 2 days at the port of Tanger-Med in Morocco. Recently on 30.10.2023, trucks with Spanish lambs waited approx. 5 hours before leaving the port and on 02.11.2023 it took 1.5

**Example:** The EU Commission evaluated average 6 hours to cross the BG-TR border. NGOs have documented variable times over the years. Most recently, on 17.09.2023, a truck with German heifers from Hungary waited for 20.5 hours with the animals on board.







# Import criteria appear sophisticated. A small mistake has catastrophic effects. Animal health rules are also not compatible with live transport and animal welfare, by road and sea

Animal transports cannot travel back in case of an irregularity concerning health issues.

**Possible Solutions** 

Border authorities/countries coordinate so that the exit point can detect any irregularities in advance and accommodate the animals until these are resolved.

When animals cannot be unloaded: list of solutions (sending back or humane killing) to adopt within a fix short term.

When an irregularity is found, animals remain confined on board the vehicles and are not unloaded for times incompatible with animal welfare.



#### **Article 7.2.11 + 7.3.11.**

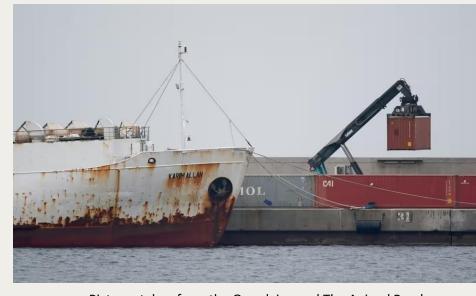
The welfare of the animals should be the first consideration in the event of a refusal to import.

Animals should be unloaded. If animals can't be unloaded, WOAH should find a rapid solution.

Supply of feed and water must be allowed when animals remain on board.

- Example: Romanian heifers remaining on board the truck in Turkish territory for 26 days (loaded on 18.08.2022, border-crossing on 22.08.2023). Some calved and died in a huge amount of dung, near a stable. Eventually, the surviving heifers, despite being unfit for the journey, were transported for more than 2000 km to Iraq.
- Example: Spanish cattle remained on board vessels Elbeik and Karim Allah for more than 3 months in 2021, being refused import by Libya for blue tongue suspicion and wandered in the Mediterranean, left alone by the competent authorities.





Pictures taken from the Guardaian and The Animal Reader





# There is a lack of destination checks on arrival and exchange of information with the EU authorities



**Bilateral agreements** and a homogenous template for the feedback concerning AW (any good examples?)



Article 7.2.3. + 7.3.2.

The receiving Competent Authority should report back to the sending Competent Authority on *significant* animal welfare problems.



# There is a lack of traceability of the animals and their fate, by the EU authorities

**Example:** EU cows were found in markets and slaughterhouses in Morocco, cruelly handled and slaughtered after 1-2-4 years from the export\*.

Example: Cows and bulls found in poor physical conditions and not treated or cruelly handled in stables and markets in Qatar and Egypt.

\*Animals´ Angels dossier, 2023: "Export of live animals to non-EU countries without animal welfare guarantees – time to take responsibility according to Article 13 TFEU" and video links for the authorities









### **Conclusion**

We believe these problems must be solved before live exports are approved, not while they are happening.

#### We NGOs are concerned for EU animals:

- to date we find the terrestrial code is not applied by several non-EU animal importing countries;
- solutions have been discussed for at least 10 years but there are only sporadic examples of where some of them have become real.

Woah can play a decisive role.

It would be useful to survey the points listed here and prepare a protocol, easy and quick to consult, collecting existing good practices/achievements and spread them for implementation in more States.

# Thank you

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Scenario workshop on long-distance
transport

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7 - November 2023, Tunis, Tunisia World Organisation for Animal Health Founded as OIE

