

Middle East Regional strategy for Animal Welfare 2022 - 2025

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Background

- Animal welfare is a complex subject with scientific, ethical, economic, cultural, religious and political dimensions. Today, animal producers are increasingly taking animal welfare into account and some have come to see it as a standard of quality of their products. There is growing consumer interest in animal welfare worldwide, making it an economic and trade issue on the world market for animals and animal products.
- The perception of animal welfare or of what does or does not constitute an act of cruelty to animals differs from one region and culture to another.
- The main challenge is to reach a consensus amongst all WOAHA Members, the sole common point being the exclusive use of a scientific basis to establish standards for adoption.



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Regional Animal Welfare vision 2022 - 2025

- The **Global Animal Welfare Strategy** has been created to provide continuing direction and coordination of the organization's actions in this important field.
- The new RAW Strategy 22 - 25, is established in line with the global strategy with the following vision:
 1. **A world where the welfare of animals is respected, promoted, and advanced, in ways that complement the pursuit of animal health, human well-being, socio-economic development and environmental sustainability.**
 2. All animals in the Region are protected by the development and adoption of sound animal welfare standards and handling practices.
 3. The commitment made by the ME countries, and key trading partners, to adopt the WOAHA Animal Welfare Guidelines: mainly to **transport by Land, by sea and by air, Killing for Disease Control Purposes, control of stray dogs' population**, etc. as described at the WOAHA terrestrial code section 7 on animal welfare.





Goals of the RAWs

- The required goals to be achieved in a regional strategy were identified as:
- **Goal 1: Promotion and achievement of a high level of understanding and awareness of animal welfare in the region through effective coordination, communication, education and training.**
- **Goal 2: Ensuring a coordinated regional approach and ongoing commitment to the implementation of WOA animal welfare standards and guidelines.**
- **Goal 3: Achievement of sustainable improvements in animal welfare, based on regional research and development.**
- **Goal 4: Development of sustainable mechanisms and funding to coordinate and promote animal welfare programs and priorities.**



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Main Objectives of the strategy:

1. To ensure the **implementation** of WOAAH Standards on animal welfare at national level through a coordinated regional approach.
2. To facilitate the development or **improvement of legislation** within member countries.
3. To **spread and promote** animal welfare knowledge within the region by means of effective coordination, communication, education and capacity building.
4. To develop **sustainable mechanisms** for the coordination and promotion of animal welfare programs in accordance with the national, regional priorities of the countries.
5. To establish **alliances** amongst key parties to facilitate the implementation of WOAAH standards.
6. Endorsement of the RAWs implementation plan by the **WOAH Regional Commission**.



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Expected benefits from the RAWs

1. A clear regional **guide** on animal welfare.
2. Optimum sustainable welfare **outcomes and indicators**.
3. Readily identifiable and clearly defined **regional** standards and guidelines.
4. Improved **animal health**.
5. Improved animal **handling and transport** means by animal owners/traders.
6. Recognized animal **welfare-friendly products**.
7. Exploration of previously unavailable international **marketing opportunities** as a result of investment in animal welfare (eg niche markets, accreditation/certification schemes).



Key targeted issues & expected results:

- ✓ Political and **high-level leadership** support within member countries.
- ✓ **Resources** and access to **technical expertise** and scientific information are available, and partnerships and collaborating activities with partner organisations are developed.
- ✓ **Stakeholders**, including farmers, industry, NGOs, academia, religious authorities and the veterinary profession actively involved in the process.
- ✓ Demonstration of the social and commercial benefit of improving animal welfare in the region
- ✓ Effective and professional coordination and communication between countries in the region.



Main Activities

- 1. Involving Authorities, as well as leading public personalities, in the implementation of the animal welfare programmes.**
- 2. Promoting and facilitating the inclusion of animal welfare concepts and applications in veterinary and animal science-related courses and curricula and provide recognition or certification for animal welfare training.**
- 3. Use existing government extension services to improve animal welfare.**
- 4. Develop a public communication strategy that will be a platform for improved, broad communication on animal welfare in consultation with all stakeholders.**



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Activities of the RR ME

5. Disseminate the translated versions of the RAWs and related information to WOAH delegates, governments, industry, producer groups, NGOs and veterinary associations...
6. Organise seminars/workshops on animal welfare to stakeholders and promote government ownership
7. Involve private NGOs in the promotion of animal welfare through using required production standards and include animal welfare in the programs of international meetings.
8. Include animal welfare in government standard operating procedures (i.e., quarantine requirements) and Government agencies to develop appropriate legislation in member countries in compliance with the regional strategy objectives.



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