The Development of Animal Welfare Strategies in Asia, the Far East and Oceania

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presented by
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• Background
• OIE
• Regional Animal Welfare Strategy for Asia, the Far East and Oceania (RAWS)
• Middle East
• Concluding Remarks
Introduction

- Animal welfare is a complex, multifaceted international policy issue

- Key to success is a constructive, collaborative and incremental approach
The OIE and animal welfare

Animal welfare has been identified as a strategic priority for the OIE since 2001, under the OIE mandate granted by all 172 members.
OIE – animal welfare

- The OIE 1st Global Conference on Animal Welfare (2004) established an international scientific consensus...and paved the way for adoption of 5 animal welfare standards in 2005, with more currently being developed.

- The OIE 2nd Global Conference on Animal Welfare (2008) was held to encourage adoption and implementation of the welfare standards and guidelines.
OIE Guiding Principles on animal welfare

• animal welfare and animal health are linked
• the 5 Freedoms and 3 Rs are supported
• standards must be based on science
• better animal welfare can improve productivity and deliver economic benefits
OIE Standards

OIE standards cover land, sea and air transport; slaughter, and killing for disease control purposes.

New ad hoc Groups are drafting texts on
• Stray dog population control
• Laboratory animal welfare
• Aquatic animal transport and slaughter
• Housing and management of production animals
• Wildlife
Established in 1924: 172 Members
Intergovernmental organisation – predates the UN
REGIONAL ANIMAL WELFARE STRATEGY FOR ASIA, THE FAR EAST & OCEANIA (RAWS)

• The process
  – Animal Welfare Workshop (Nov 2007)
  – Writing Group (Feb 2008)

• Countries involved

• OIE endorsement
RAWS

• Scope

• Vision

• Purpose

• Goals (4), Objectives, Activities
RAWS Vision

A region where the welfare of animals is respected, promoted and incrementally advanced, simultaneously with the pursuit of progress and socioeconomic development.
RAWS Goals

1. Promote and achieve a high level of understanding and awareness of animal welfare in the region through effective coordination, communication, education and training.

2. Ensure a coordinated regional approach and ongoing commitment to the implementation of OIE animal welfare standards and guidelines.

3. Achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on regional and international research and development.

4. Develop sustainable mechanisms to coordinate and promote animal welfare programs and priorities.
RAWS - issues

- Size/language
- Culture/religion
- Socio-economic situation
- Priorities
- Benefits
RAWS implementation

- Implementation Working Group – November 2008
- Draft implementation plan to be submitted to OIE International Committee for endorsement in May 2009
- Establishment of a Regional Animal Welfare Coordination Group to drive and monitor implementation
- Country plans to be developed
Current RAWS activities

- Interim secretariat-Australian Government, Animal Welfare Branch
- Editing/circulating draft implementation plan for approval
- Developing an inventory of potential resource support
- Compiling an event calendar
- Updating key players of developments
...RAWS implementation

For the RAWS to be successful it will need:

- Endorsement by OIE
- Regional Representative for Asia & the Pacific involvement
- Political and high level leadership and support by member countries
- Active stakeholder involvement
- A demonstration of social and commercial benefit of animal welfare
- Resources and access to technical expertise
The Middle East

- **Australia Workshop on Animal Welfare, Bahrain, Sept 2005**
  - tailed the 8th conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East

- **First Australia-GCC Animal Welfare Workshop held in Muscat, Oman, Nov 2005**
  - GCC countries identified as a specific group within the Middle East on which to focus further work
...the Middle East

- Key resolution from Oman was to form a working group to develop a Regional Strategic Plan on Animal Handling and Transport Arrangements
- The Strategic Plan has similar goals to the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy
- Improved definition of role of Australian government and Australian industry in improving animal welfare practices in key Middle East markets
Concluding remarks

- RAWS presents a model approach to establish a framework for improved animal welfare
- Within the framework, countries need to develop and implement their own priorities in an incremental way
- Political support and effective and constructive collaboration with key players is essential
- Effective coordination and resource support are key success factors
- Animal health and welfare are inextricably linked
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Reference

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Journal of the Commonwealth Veterinary Association, 2009, pp 18-23

or visit

www.animalwelfare.gov.au