

The Link between Animal Welfare, The Environment and Development in Africa

Simplifying the conceptualization of Animal Welfare

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Presentation Plan:

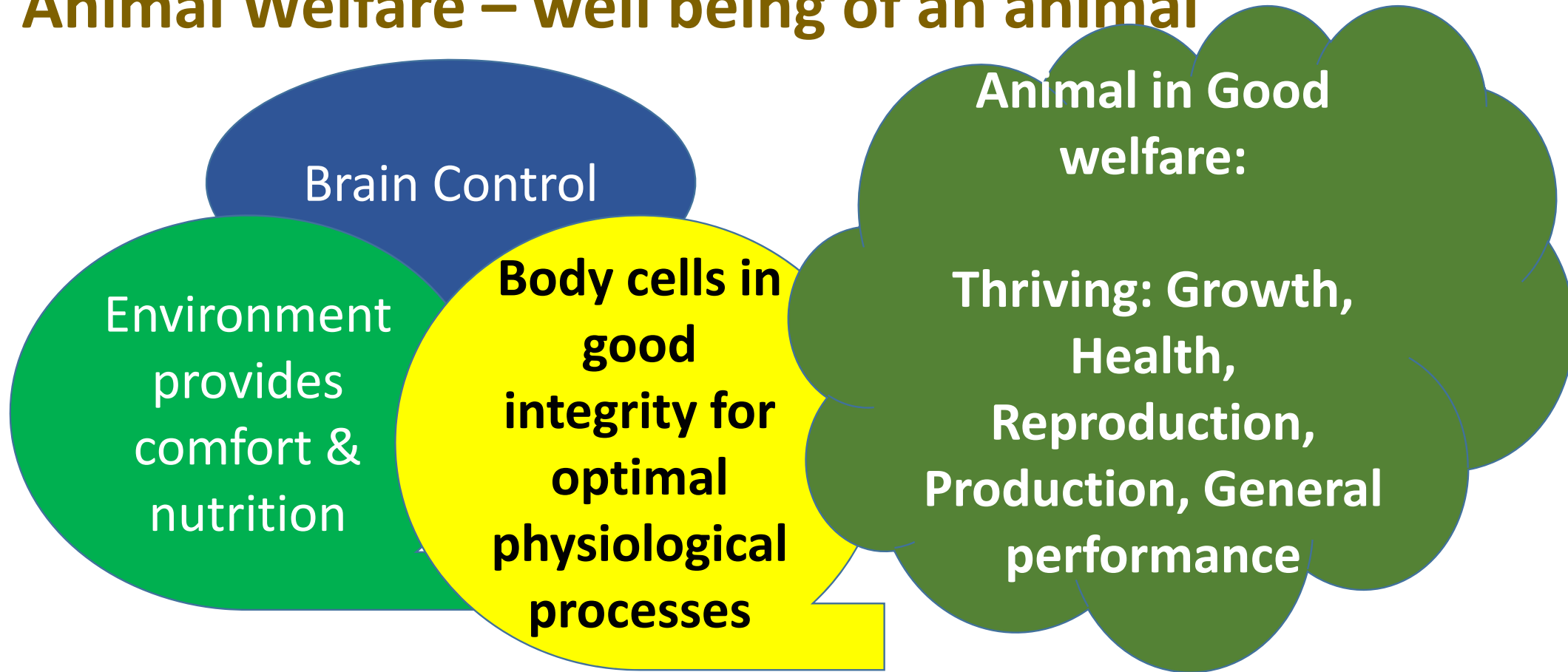
- **Objectives of the Presentation**
- **Conceptualization of Animal Welfare**
- **Link between Animals, Environment and Development**
- **Discussion & Recommendations**
- **Conclusion**

Objectives of the Presentation

- To elucidate the basics of Animal Welfare –
Conceptualization of Animal Welfare
- To elucidate the link between animal welfare, the environment and sustainable development
- To stimulate dialogues about the benefits of good animal welfare
- To persuade opinion leaders [owners, policy makers, etc.] to invest in good animal welfare

Conceptualization of Animal Welfare

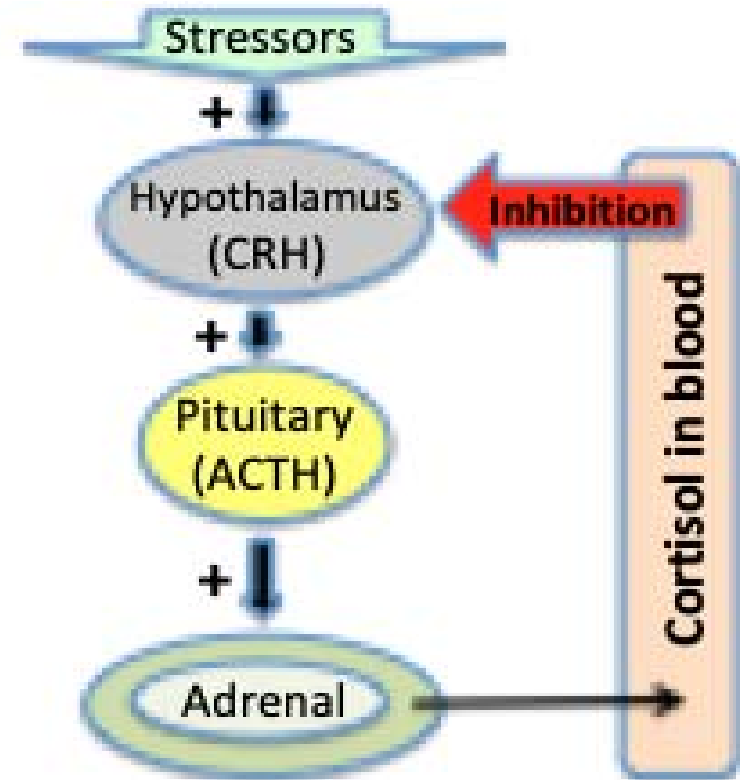
Animal Welfare – well being of an animal



Animal welfare refers to the **physical, physiological, and psychological well being** of an animal

Brain Control –
sensory -> HPA Axis

Body cells in good
integrity for
optimal
physiological
processes



Normally, Cortisol helps control blood sugar levels and regulate metabolism, salt and water balance and helps control blood pressure. It is therefore a crucial hormone to protect overall health and well-being – **threat [stress], cortisol regulation disrupted – survival mode!**

Good Animal Welfare

Thriving
Animals

**Feed efficiency:
rapid growth &
optimum
production [meat,
eggs, calves, milk,
byproducts] &
health**

**Happy Society:
Food security,
Public Health,
wealth
creation
[prosperity -
Development]**

Animals have the capacity to detect threats to their wellbeing. The threats trigger the cortisol effect to tackle the threat

Disruption of Animal Welfare - Injury

Injury
[damage to
cells]

Body cells unable
to perform
physiological
processes
optimally

**Animal not in Good
welfare:**

**Animal does not
thrive: reduced
growth, health,
reproduction,
production, general
performance**

Injury [trauma, infection, poison, etc.]
disrupts the animal's wellbeing

Disruption of Animal Welfare - malnutrition

Malnutrition

Body cells lack the ingredients to perform physiological processes optimally

Nutrients are the basic factors used in physiological processes

Animal not in Good welfare:

Animal does not thrive: reduced growth, health, reproduction, production, general performance

Disruption of Animal Welfare - Emotional

Threat in environment
[intimidation, irritation, frustration, hot/cold, etc.]

Emotional distress [fear, anxiety] -> cortisol effect [eliminate or flee from the threat or "freeze"]

Animal not in Good welfare:

Animal does not thrive: reduced growth, health, reproduction, production, general performance

Fear and anxiety are manifestations of the perceived **threat** to the wellbeing of the animal – triggers cortisol effect

Sentience – the ability to suffer from physical and emotional discomfort

Physical discomfort [pain, hunger, etc.]

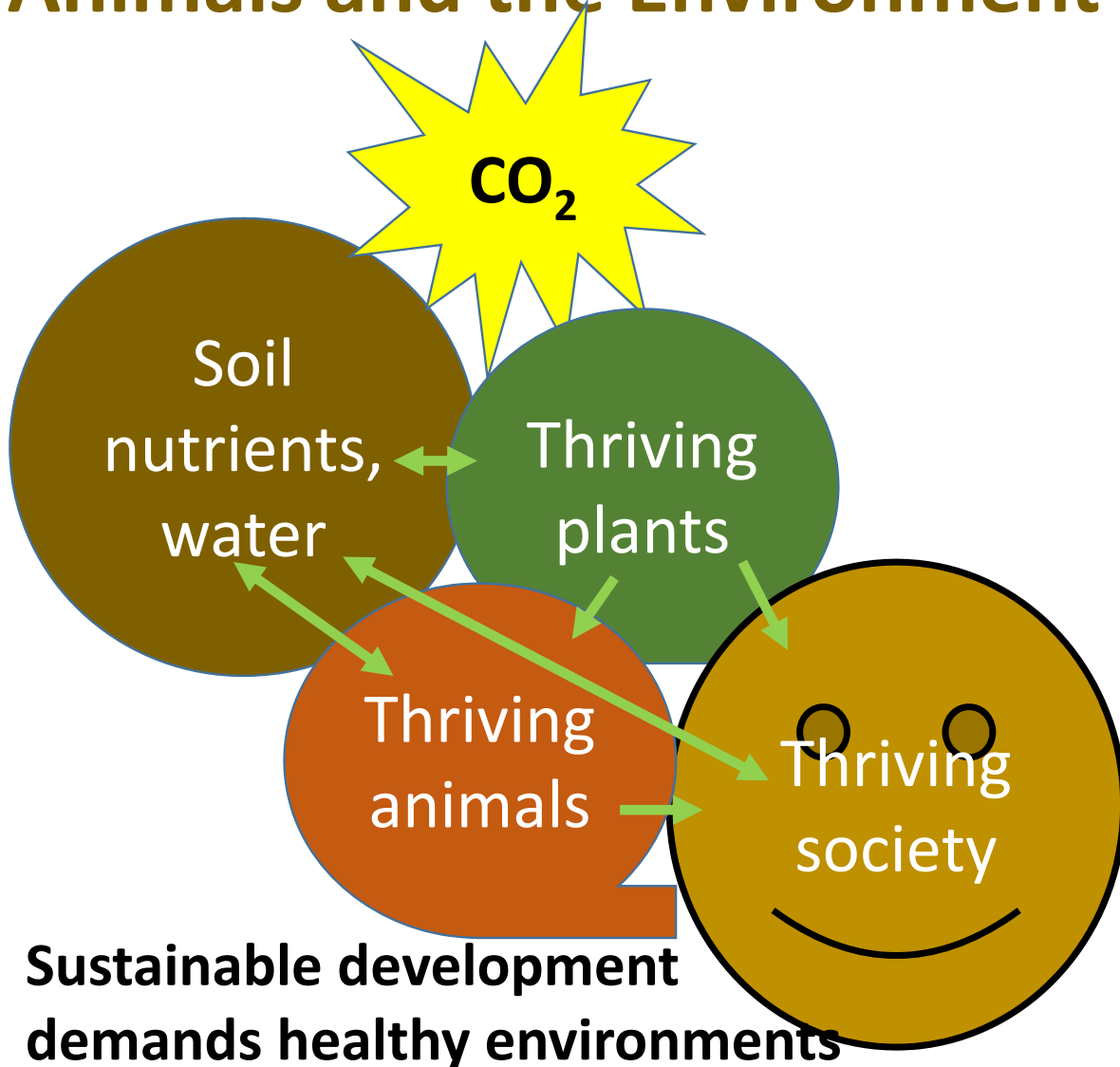
- Animal perceives pain or threat of pain and enters into stress mode [cortisol effect]: prepares body to fight or flee from it
 - Increased heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, sugar metabolism, dilated eyes, etc.
 - Decreased blood flow to the g.i.t [depressed digestion & absorption] and immune system [immunosuppression]
- If it can't fight the stress or of flee from it, it “freezes”
 - Remains in a state of chronic stress mode – i.e. **mal-digestion, mal-absorption, immunosuppression**

Emotional discomfort [Perceived as threat to animal's wellbeing]

- Derives from the **instinct** to express behaviors that sustain or enhance the quality of life
 - The drive to engage in instinctive behaviors is sub-conscious, and the benefits from such behaviors are perceived by the animal as “being in a status of wellbeing” = “emotional comfort”
 - The inability to engage in those behaviors is perceived by the animal as “being not in a status of wellbeing” = “emotional discomfort” – perceived as a threat to animal's wellbeing
 - To tackle the threat, enters into stress mode [cortisol effect]
- Outcome – mal-digestion, mal-absorption, immunosuppression
 - **-> It is therefore important to recognize sentience in animals**

Animals, Environment and Development

Animals and the Environment



Animals are clearly at the center of thriving environments & society

- nutrient loops [manure in the wild or agriculture]
- Ecosystem balance [wolves in Yellowstone, lions vs hyenas in Kenya, elephants vs community conflicts, pastoralism in Kenya]
- Climate change – intensive agriculture and carbon emission [feed production, processing, etc.]

Protect animals to protect the Environment & Society!

Discussion & Recommendations

Guiding question: Where do we want to be in Africa with our animals in the 21st century [huge population – Global population projected to increase by 2.37 billion by 2050, with Africa estimated to contribute 54% of it, huge demand for animal protein [intensive production], huge risk of zoonotic diseases & negative impact on environment, urgent demand for mitigation against climate change, high consciousness about civil rights [demand to implement SDGs], heightened consciousness about sentience of animals? Etc.

Why Concern about Animal Welfare?

- Animal Welfare translates into human welfare
 - Ensures productivity - Implies profitability
 - Ensures public health
 - Ensures environmental health
 - One health (source of public health challenges)
 - Sustainability
 - Ecological integrity
 - Nutrient loops
 - Ecosystem balance
 - Biodiversity

Africa-centric Narratives on Animal Welfare

- There is low awareness about **sentience** in animals
 - Constraints in Africa:
 - Poverty levels – competing priorities
 - Socialization – “animals created to serve man”
 - Need for Africa-centric narratives to drive AW agenda in Africa
 - Implies benefits driven justifications for AW – food security, public health [minimize risk of food safety issues and zoonotic diseases], enhancement of livelihoods [income generation], sustainable agriculture [climatic, water & soil issues; market access]

1. Invest in sensitization and awareness creation, especially to key decision makers

Interventions that Ensure good Animal Welfare

Provision of:

- Appropriate collection of breeding materials
 - Avoid “breeding stress” – susceptible animals
 - Avoid transmission of genetic/infectious diseases
- Appropriate selection of breeding materials [‘seed’]
 - Animal-centered factors
 - Reproductive ability
 - Environmental fitness (adaptability)
 - Fitness for purpose (intended use of the animal)
 - Other animal/environmental factors

2. Invest in the development and delivery of Professional Services & Extension + RD

- Appropriate feeding
 - Ensure nutritional, safe and palatable feeds/water
- Appropriate housing
 - Comfortable
- Appropriate harvesting, transportation and handling methods
 - Humane handling – **Sentience!!**
- Appropriate slaughter methods
 - Fearless and painless
 - Separate waiting animals from those getting slaughtered [sentience]
 - Stun gun / anesthesia

4. Invest in regulatory frameworks and enforcement

Conclusions

- There is a clear link between Animals, Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa in the 21st Century Africa
- There has to be an interlinked approach to animal, environmental and developmental issues for sustainable development to happen
- The recognition of sentience in animals is the basis for true animal welfare, because then one begins to realize that whatever you provide to the animal is in vain if its psychological wellbeing is not provided for

Last Word



“The Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa is Africa’s statement about its commitment to implement the SDG resolutions touching on animal welfare” – 2,3,8,13,14 & 15

Tennyson Williams

Regional Director - World Animal Protection Africa

May the dialogues in this conference yield pragmatic interventions to the gaps on Animal Welfare in Africa

Thank you

His attitude is the master of a Man's destiny - mm