



AFRICAN UNION
INTERAFRICAN BUREAU
FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES



8TH AFRICA ANIMAL WELFARE CONFERENCE - ACTION 2024 (AAWC)

**Theme: Partnership Actions to Improve Animal Welfare
and Environmental Sustainability**



Conference Report

September 30 – October 2, 2024 United
Nations Complex Nairobi, Kenya



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAWC	Africa Animal Welfare Conference
AHSA	Animal Health Strategy for Africa
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AMR	Anti - Microbial Resistance
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
ANAW	Africa Network for Animal Welfare
APAW	Africa Platform for Animal Welfare
ASPCA	American Society for the Protection and Care of Animals
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AU-IBAR	African Union- InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources
AWESDE	Animal Welfare, Environment and Sustainable Development Nexus
AWI	Animal Welfare Institute
AWSA	Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa
CBD	Convention for Biological Diversity
CBO	Community Based Organization
CIWF	Compassion in World Farming
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COP	Conference of Parties
CPR	Committee of Permanent Representatives
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSU	Civil Society Unit
CVO	Chief Veterinary Officer
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMGSF	Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
ICWE	International Coalition for Working Equids
IFAW	International Fund for Animal Welfare
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
INC	Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
InterNICHE	International Network for Humane Education
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KM-GBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
KSPCA	Kenya Society for the Protection and Care of Animals
LIDESA	Livestock Development Strategy for Africa
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MGS	Major Groups and Stakeholders
LEGS	Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards
MGFC	Major Groups Facilitating Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

OECPR	Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives
OHHLEP	One Health High Level Expert Panel
OWA	Open Wing Alliance
PADCO	Pan African Donkey Conference
PEP	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
PETS	Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act
PFRS	Policy Framework and Reforms Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa
PrEP	Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis
PrepCom	Preparatory Committees
RAB	Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board
RAFFS	Resilient African Feed and Fodder Systems Project
RAWO	Rwanda Animal Welfare Organization
REC	Regional Economic Communities
RCM	Regional Consultative Meetings
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SPANNA	Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad
TAWESO	Tanzania Animal Welfare Society
TOT	Training of Trainers
TDS	The Donkey Sanctuary
UN	United Nations
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UDAW	Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
VR	Virtual Reality
WAG	Welfare for Animals Guild
WAP	World Animal Protection
WFA	World Federation for Animals
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WOAH	World Organization for Animal Health
WTG	Welttierschutzgesellschaft e.V
WTO	World Trade Organization
WTS	Welttierschutzstiftung

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Kenya, a country famous for its incredible and diverse flora and fauna, home of avid talent people and Africa's Silicon Valley with technology and a leader in technology and innovation, welcomed delegates to the 8th Africa Animal Welfare Conference - Action 2024 which was hosted at the UN Complex, in Nairobi, Kenya. The conference was organized by the Government of Kenya, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), African Union InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), and Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW).

The conference gathered 856 delegates with 238 attending physically and 618 attending virtually. We were pleased to have 58 countries represented, 35 of them being African countries while 23 of them being countries from other part of the world. The conference tackled the theme, Partnership Actions to Improve Animal Welfare and Environmental Sustainability, as in-depth topical presentations were made and diverse expert panels convened. Representatives from different organizations posed pertinent questions, delegates relayed inquisitive comments and working groups expounded on profound ideas and topics.

Drawing representatives from regional and international civil society organizations, research and academic institutions, animal welfare practitioners, conservation organizations, environmental and sustainable development experts, the conference deliberated on vital issues and brought out crucial points of the sessions which culminated into 15 resolutions.

The conference secretariat would like to express profound gratitude to the delightful delegates who were able to make time to attend the conference virtually and physically. In the spirit of the theme, we indeed worked hard together to ensure that crucial points were tackled, and the applicable decisions were made. As a whole, we championed our role in working to address global animal welfare, environment and sustainable development challenges.



Mr. Josphat Ngonyo, Conference Patron, Africa Animal Welfare Conference (AAWC)

We recognize and thank dignitaries including African government officials, Member States representing different countries across the world, officials from international agencies and national expert leaders who attended the event. We express our deep gratitude to the Kenyan Judiciary for allowing six (6) honorable judges and one magistrate and various local and international legal practitioners to grace the conference with their presence.

We thank the Government of Kenya for opening their doors to welcome discussions on animal welfare and their support as we diligently prepared for the conference and their participation in the conference.

The secretariat would like to share our special appreciation to Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Deputy Executive Director and Mr. Ulf Bjornholm, Chief, Civil Society Unit, of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Dr. Huyam Salih, Director of African Union-InterAfrican Bureau (AU-IBAR) for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), and Mr. Tennyson Williams, the Regional Director for Africa at World Animal Protection and the Chair of the Africa Animal Welfare Conference (AAWC) Organizing Committee.

We sincerely thank Prof. James Nkansah-Obrempong, the Chair of Board of Directors of Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW), Ms. Karin Siegmund, the Director of Welttierschutzstiftung (WTS), and Ms. Susan Millward, Chief Executive Officer of Animal Welfare Institute (AWI).

We extend our sincere appreciation to the conference partners, whose invaluable contributions made hosting this conference possible. We thank you for your financial, technical, and steadfast support. We value them for standing alongside the secretariat in ensuring the success of this conference. We thank Animal Welfare Institute, The Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad (SPANNA), Humane Society International (HSI), and Compassion in World Farming, Welttierschutzstiftung (WTS) and World Animal Protection.

We are grateful to our Conference Co-hosting Partners: The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the African Union - InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU- IBAR), the Government of Kenya, and Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW).

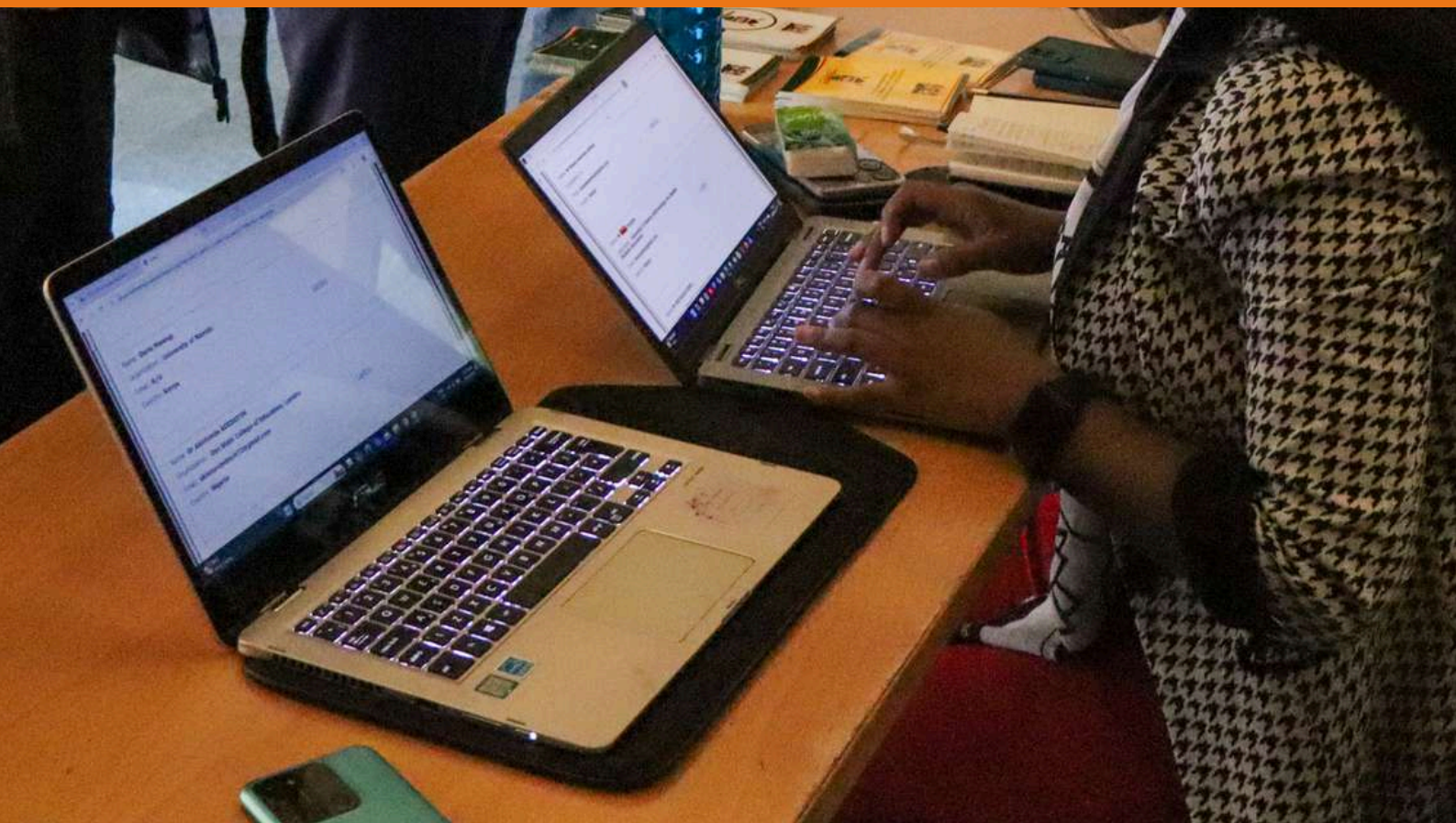
We would like to appreciate, in a special way, UNEP's Civil Society Unit Secretariat representatives; Mr. Ulf Bjornholm, Mr. Isaiah Otieno, Mr. David Ombisi, Radhika Ochalik and Ms. Melissa Ngilandala, the AU-IBAR office represented by Dr. Mwenda Mbaka, Dr. Hiver Boussini, Prof. James Wabacha, Dr. Elynn Njeri and Dr. Nelly Isyagi, Conference Moderators, Josiah Ojwang and Hellen Aura, and the Conference Organizing Committee chaired by Tennyson Williams, and the Secretariat.

I sincerely extend my deepest gratitude to the delegates attending in person or virtually. We thank you for your invaluable contribution to this year's conference. We could not have achieved the deep conversation and engagement on this important discourse. A special thank you to all the presenters, panelists and speakers for fostering an environment of learning for the future of animal welfare in Africa.





Opening Session



CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

The proceedings of the conference began as the chair of the Conference Organizing Committee, Mr Tennyson Williams, took the stage to moderate the opening session of the conference. He gave a warm welcome to the delegates attending the 8th Africa Animal Welfare Conference (AAWC) in person and online. He proceeded to give an overview of what the opening session of the three-day conference would entail including opening remarks from representatives of the co-organizing and partner organizations. A special address would be shared by a representative from the Government of Burkina Faso.

WELCOME REMARKS

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

Ms. Elizabeth Mrema began by thanking the delegates for attending the conference and welcoming them to the headquarters of UNEP, UN-HABITAT and the United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON). She warmly expressed the pleasure and privilege to partner with the co-hosting organizations in organizing the Africa Animal Welfare Conferences since 2017.

She drew the attention of the delegates to the UNEA resolutions, specifically the Animal Welfare, Environment and Sustainable Development Nexus Resolution which was adopted in 2022 as a landmark resolution in recognition of the role of animal welfare in addressing environmental challenges. She mentioned that the resolution highlights the critical link between the wellbeing of animals, human health and ecosystem preservation.

She stated that the resolution provides a vital framework as organizations work towards improving the welfare of animals and environmental sustainability.



Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Deputy Executive Director, UNEP

She noted that in a world where agriculture and livestock rearing, and increasingly more intense, Africa could provide some interesting and more sustainable approaches. Ms Mrema gave an example, citing that 70% - 90% of livestock in the continent was produced in extensive natural raising of livestock, mainly in pastoral areas. She explained that, as grazing lands face encroachment, degradation and climate change that connect between the communities and animals was under pressure. Intensive farming was a trend which harmed ecosystems and agriculture and accounted for about 75% of deforestation in Africa. Much of the deforestation was due to cattle rearing.

She pointed out that wildlife crime was a crucial topic that was being addressed. The illicit trade of wildlife in Africa is thought to be worth up to USD \$20 billion per year. UNEP has been at the forefront in fighting wildlife crime through the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES). She stated that UNEP has been supporting a crackdown on wildlife trade and poaching across the continent by training conservationists, law enforcement officers and custom officials as well as implementing new technologies such as DNA testing to track illegal activities.

Ms Mrema expressed that they were pleased to welcome the conference and hear its outcomes. From UNEP's perspective, the conference covered several key objectives. The conference sought to promote any understanding and active engagement by African stakeholders on the interconnected issue of animal welfare, human health and environment. This was central to the UN One Health Approach recognizing that this area was deeply intertwined and required a holistic approach.

She mentioned that the conference would also build capacity among African Major Groups and Stakeholders in sustainable development. Empowering these groups of knowledge and tools would drive meaningful environmental progress. The conference would serve to inform stakeholders about UNEP's ongoing work and provide them with pathways to become actively involved particularly through its accreditation.

Ms. Mrema emphasized that UNEP was committed to encouraging opportunities for engagement in UNEP-led inter-governmental processes such as the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) which helped the diverse groups of stakeholders to equally contribute to global environmental governance.

She reminded the delegates that the conference included a session where participants would be able to learn more about UNEP and its governing bodies, how to become formally accredited and how to be involved in UNEP-led processes and UNEA. She expressed that one of UNEP's objectives is to ensure that stakeholders are heard, listened to and that their input is mainstreamed into the work of UNEP.

Ms. Mrema stated that UNEP had actively supported civil society engagement in Africa over recent years by having focused efforts to increase the participation of organizations from Africa in intergovernmental decision-making processes. As a result, they were proud to witness a significant rise in engagement and the number of registered African stakeholders in recent years. She gave an example of the regional stakeholder meeting that was held in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, which saw the participation of over 200 stakeholders from across the continent. She cited that this growth reflected their commitment to strengthening the role of African civil society in shaping environmental policy both at a regional and global level.

She further stated that the conference was an opportunity to share expert knowledge and compare valuable experiences in the field of animal welfare. It was hoped that the conference would encourage new innovation, foster new partnerships on a range of issues around livestock production, human health, the environment and sustainable development.

Ms Mrema hoped that delegates would find the conference a fruitful and productive experience and looked forward to the outcomes of the key event.

AFRICAN UNION INTER-AFRICAN BUREAU FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES (AU-IBAR)



Dr Huyam Salih, Director, InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)

Dr Huyam Salih took the stage and commenced by relaying greetings to the delegates attending the conference in person and online. She expressed that she was pleased to address the assembly at the 8th Africa Animal Welfare Conference that marks another step in the journey towards the development and integration of animal welfare in responsible and sustainable animal resource development in Africa.

On behalf of the chairperson of the African Union Commission, H. E Moussa Faki Mahamat, and H.E. Josefa Correia Sacko, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment (ARBE) of the African Union Commission, she welcomed delegates to the conference.

She recognized the partnership between AU-IBAR, Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW), and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in co-organizing the conference. She further recognized various partners in animal welfare including World Animal Protection, Donkey Sanctuary, and Brooke, for the support they provided towards the organization of the conference. She appreciated their individual and collective efforts.

She stated that the theme of the conference, Partnership Actions to Improve Animal Welfare and Environmental Sustainability, was the inspiration behind her remarks.

It marked another step towards integration of animal welfare and sustainable animal resources development and the preservation of the sustainable environment in Africa.

She highlighted that the theme aligned with the UNEA 5.2 Resolution of the Nexus between animal welfare, the environment and sustainable development which was adopted in March 2022. It aligned with Agenda 2063, the blueprint of African development in the following 50 years. It addressed the interlinkages between sustainable economic growth, natural resources management, biodiversity conservation and healthy humans, healthy animals and healthy ecosystems.

She emphasized that animal resources contribute immensely to food and nutrition security, livelihoods and to socio-economic development of Africa. However, the continent had not been able to fully realize the potential of the sector due to low investments from the public and private sectors, poor infrastructure and inadequate capacity.

Dr Salih cited that to respond to these challenges and in line with Agenda 2063, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, post-Malabo Commitments, and the SDGs, AU-IBAR worked with relevant partners, in championing the implementation of Livestock Development Strategy for Africa (LIDES 2016-2035), Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa (AWSA) and the Animal Health Strategy for Africa (AHS) which were all adopted and endorsed by the head of states of the governments of the African Union. These continental frameworks aimed to improve the welfare of animals, to protect the environment, to achieve a healthier life on earth, for all species and to provide a long-term vision for sustainable development in the continent.

She gave an update on the implementation of the AWSA and the establishment of the African Platform for Animal Welfare (APAW). She stated that despite the progress made, there has been low visibility of AWSA as a guiding vision for integrating the welfare interests of humans and animals in Africa. The implementation has been inadequate, and the progress has been slow. This was due to inadequate coordination efforts, a lack of monitoring and reporting frameworks among the stakeholders including the African Union Commission institutes, the Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), non-state actors, organizations within Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) and different partners in animal welfare.

Dr Salih informed delegates that due to this, AU-IBAR had conducted a stock taking exercise on the implementation of the AWSA. The stock taking exercise involved the engagement of Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs), the country animal welfare focal points, FAO and WOAH. She stated that the rationale for conducting the stock taking exercise was to accelerate the implementation of the strategy through impactful approaches and activities that address the gaps and challenges in implementation, informed by rigorous monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

She mentioned that since the adoption of the strategy in 2017, significant efforts have been made to improve animal welfare across Africa. However, challenges such as limited financial resources, weak institutional frameworks, and lack of strong political wills, have slowed progress. The stock taking exercise aimed to assess the status of the implementation of the strategy, while identifying the barriers, and develop targeted recommendations to strengthen partnerships that are critical for driving policy adoptions and sustainability. The most significant findings of the stock taking exercise of the implementation of the AWSA would be presented later during the conference.

She highlighted the importance of partnerships in overcoming the barriers to animal welfare policy adoption. The revitalization of the APAW was key to ensuring that the strategy implementation was well coordinated across the continent. She reiterated that African Union Commission is committed towards fostering partnerships in promoting the animal welfare agenda in Africa. This would be done by providing leadership in responsible and sustainable animal resources development through mainstreaming the best animal welfare practices across the continent, following the One Health-One Welfare-One Planet paradigm.

Dr Salih thanked delegates for their dedication and enthusiasm, and she looked forward to fruitful deliberations at the conference.



AFRICA NETWORK FOR ANIMAL WELFARE (ANAW)



Prof. James Nkansah-Obrempong, Chair, Board of Directors, Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW)

Prof. Nkansah-Obrempong began by welcoming delegates who were attending the conference virtually and in person on behalf of the Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW) fraternity. He encouraged everyone to find some time to enjoy the beautiful scenery and the hospitality of the Kenyan people.

He informed the delegates that the conference is a premier African platform for animal welfare stakeholders designed to focus on issues from varied dimensions inclined towards enhancing progressive development of society. The conference achieves this through advocating for better human health, increased care for animals and protection of the natural environment. He cited that ANAW strongly believed that animal welfare was a human responsibility at the individual level and was also a collective issue.

Prof. Nkansah-Obrempong relayed that as a pan-African animal welfare advocacy civil society organization, ANAW worked through engaging like-minded partners such as other civil society organizations, governments, inter-governmental organizations, the private sector and local communities. He recognized the UNEP and AU-IBAR which teamed up with ANAW to become co-organizers and hosts of the continental conference since its inception in 2017.

He reiterated that the conference theme of the year 2024, Partnership Actions to Improve Animal Welfare and Environmental Sustainability, captured the aspiration of Africa in regard to the value of animals vis-à-vis their welfare. He cited that domestic and wild animals were a key part of the livelihood component in many families, and in almost every homestead, an animal was kept in Africa.

He added that animals make significant contributions to the livelihoods of most people and their value was steadily gaining interest and finding its way into many conversations about development in Africa. This thought was helped in a very significant way by the growing consciousness about the interlink between people, animals and the environment, and the reality of a shared destiny.

He cited that ANAW believes that animals should not suffer and that everyone in Africa needs to have a basic understanding of animal welfare. They should engage in practices that support good care and minimize the suffering of animals. The AAWC is based on the premise that animal welfare practice is the best way of reducing the suffering of animals.

He believed that civil society organizations, irrespective of their mandate and jurisdiction, play an important role in promoting sustainable development in Africa. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) deserve recognition, goodwill, good faith, and cooperation to achieve their goals efficiently and work effectively.

Prof. Nkansah-Obrempong mentioned that in its new Strategic Plan (2021-2025), ANAW aimed to build a stronger and diverse animal welfare network of stakeholders across Africa to promote humane treatment of all animals. He encouraged delegates to take in the lessons that would be given by a wide array of experts lined up to speak and present their papers in these areas of concern. It was anticipated that they would gain from discussions and interventions from different experiences expounding on the theme of the conference.

He thanked the Government of Kenya, for its unwavering support to make the conference happen. He expressed sincere gratitude to UNEP and AU-IBAR for teamwork, moral encouragement, and collaboration in organizing this 8th edition of the AAWC. He also thanked the partners, donors, sponsors and individuals who contributed the needed resources towards making the conference a success. He thanked the delegates in attendance for their keen interest in attending the conference and wished them a fruitful and enlightening time.

CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE



Tennyson Williams, Chair of the Conference Organizing Committee and Director for Africa, World Animal Protection

Mr Tennyson Williams, the chair of the Conference Organizing Committee and Director for Africa, World Animal Protection, took the stage and called delegates to attention. He began by welcoming delegates to the 8th Africa Animal Welfare Conference 2024. He invited delegates to visit the people, animals and landscapes in Kenya.

He expressed profound gratitude for the delegates' supporting entrusting the secretariat with organizing the prestigious continental conference. He felt that it was a privilege for the secretariat to host the 8th AAWC in Nairobi, Kenya. They were delighted to open their doors to the impactful meeting of minds on topics covering animal welfare, people and the environment, and pledged to ensure that it became a successful undertaking on behalf of the animal welfare fraternity.

He reiterated the assertion that brought the delegates together - animals are sentient beings and should not suffer at the hands of people. He noted that across the continent, many homesteads provide a home for animals and that the animals are an essential part of providing a livelihood for families for both subsistence and commercial purposes.

He mentioned that, unfortunately, in some instances, animals are vulnerable and are often subjected to much suffering caused by human beings. He was pleased that as a community, they had prioritized an annual caucus of animal welfare stakeholders to deliberate on critical issues that affect animals, the environment and people, and seek solutions to the prevailing challenges as they emerged.

He stated that it was at this time that a group of animal welfare practitioners gathered in that same city, Nairobi, and venue, United Nations Complex in 2017 where they examined and deliberated on safeguarding a common destiny for animal welfare, environment, and sustainable development. They then traversed the continent establishing ground in Ethiopia, Ghana, Botswana, Rwanda and now in Kenya. They arrived a different refined platform having gained massive strides in their undertaking. He pointed out that they had developed resolutions that had resulted in concrete outcomes and changed the tides in different fields and topics such as donkey welfare, animal agriculture, regional development initiatives, international policy development, and animal-people-environment interlinkages.

Mr Williams stated that delegates had seen trends emerge in the previous years - including taking on a multidisciplinary approach to animal welfare, discussing diverse topics including animals in the human mental health field, just transition in agriculture, industrial food production and consumption, fisheries, aquaculture, and aquatic animal production, and focused a lens on religious perspectives among other crucial topics. They had also taken on new dimensions by highlighting positive emotions in animals as measures of good animal welfare. With the ever-increasing challenges resulting from climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, they had held discourse on environmental factors affecting animal welfare, wildlife conservation and sustainable development.

He stated that they upheld Africa as the continent that it is: A continent where the bulk of its population was young people. It was critical that they involved the youth in proactive actions on environmental and animal welfare matters. They had established that all human beings had a responsibility to improve the welfare of animals and protect the environment to achieve a healthier life on earth. They had seen the need to mainstream animal welfare and environmental matters in all aspects of development in Africa. He emphasized that animal welfare policies and legislation across the continent and the globe should be prioritized.

Mr Williams cited that the 8th AAWC hoped to review and commit to action, plans and partnerships that need to be taken towards enhancing animal welfare practices and environmental conservation. The conference advocated for enhanced support for animal welfare across Africa, demonstrated through the participation of government representatives, the civil society, the United Nations, other international organizations and stakeholders at the conference.

He called on delegates to heed the clarion call. What human beings do, or not do, would cause dire consequences on the health and welfare of animals, on the environment and on human beings. He invited delegates at the conference to deliberate on partnership actions that would enhance the delicate relationship between animals, people and the environment. These actions should be pursued as they jointly work together to achieve sustainable development in Africa which was consistent with the African Union Commission's Agenda 2063.

He profoundly thanked the co-hosts, partners and delegates for ensuring that this event took place. He concluded by urging delegates to work together in collaboration by stating a popular Swahili saying, Umoja ni Nguvu (Unity is Strength).

MINISTRY FOR ENVIRONMENT, BURKINA FASO

Hon Tamini gave a speech on behalf of Dr Roger Baro, Minister for Environment in Burkina Faso.

Hon. Philippe Tamini, Director General at the Ministry of Environment in Burkina Faso, delivered a speech at the 8th Africa Animal Welfare Conference, expressing gratitude to the event organizers on behalf of Burkina Faso. He extended warm greetings from the resilient people of Burkina Faso, who, despite the challenges posed by climate change and insecurity, continue their efforts toward economic and social development while prioritizing animal welfare. He emphasized that animal welfare, defined as the positive mental and physical state achieved through the fulfillment of physiological and behavioral needs, deserves greater attention from all stakeholders.

Hon. Tamini highlighted Burkina Faso's commitment to integrating animal welfare into its national development policies, with particular emphasis on animal health. He noted the establishment of the "One Health Platform" through a presidential decree, which has effectively coordinated the efforts of three key ministries: the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Animal Health, and the Ministry of Wildlife and Environment.

This collaborative framework, comprising various organs, including Thematic Commission No. 6 on Zoonotic Diseases, has led to significant achievements in animal and environmental protection. He cited notable examples such as daily epidemiological surveillance and early notifications that have helped contain epidemic outbreaks, as well as early detection, notification, and response to public health threats, such as zoonotic diseases. Regular vaccination programs for animals against diseases such as rabies, capacity building for stakeholders involved in prevention, and multisectoral health surveillance of food products were also highlighted as key successes.



Hon. Philippe Tamini, Director General, Minister for Environment in Burkina Faso.

At the sectoral level, Hon. Tamini discussed the Ministry of Environment's initiatives, including the development of a National Environmental Strategy (SNE) in 2019 and the implementation of the Project for Improving Water Potential in Wildlife Areas of Burkina Faso (PAPHAF). The project's primary goal is to address the water needs of wildlife populations in designated areas. Some of the project's key achievements include the construction of 28 boreholes and 10 ponds, the dredging of 9 ponds, and the rehabilitation of a water reservoir. In addition, the project has strengthened the capacities of wildlife stakeholders and conducted an inventory of large diurnal mammal species in the Eastern region, contributing to improved ecological monitoring.

In his address, Hon. Tamini called upon African nations to work in synergy for better management of wildlife corridors and to adopt regulations conducive to species conservation. He underscored the importance of Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW) as a platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange. He further emphasized the need for stronger commitments following the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF), urging countries to align their national biodiversity strategies with the global framework. He cited that Burkina Faso has already undertaken this initiative and stands ready to share its experiences with other African nations.

Hon. Tamini concluded his remarks by reaffirming Burkina Faso's commitment to partnering with ANAW to enhance animal welfare and promote environmental sustainability. He expressed confidence that through continued cooperation and shared efforts, significant progress could be achieved in improving the well-being of animals across the continent.

He ended his address by thanking the participants for their attention and reaffirming Burkina Faso's unwavering support for the cause of animal welfare and sustainable environmental management

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FORESTRY, REPUBLIC OF KENYA



Mr John Elungata, Secretary for Administration in the State Department for Environment and Climate Change, Republic of Kenya

Mr. John Elungata gave a speech on behalf of Hon Adan Duale, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Republic of Kenya

Mr Elungata took the opportunity to recognize the delegates and welcome them to Kenya, a home to fascinating animals found in mountains, tropical rainforests, drylands, semi-arid lands and in the depths of Kenya's oceans.

Mr Elungata stated that they were pleased to have the honour of co-hosting the 8th Africa Animal Welfare Conference - Action 2024.

In a country that is home to more than 35,000 species of flora and fauna, the conference was deemed important to the nation as many communities cared for animals at home as the state and other stakeholders ensured the protection of the animals in the wild. He stated that it was unfortunate that in some instances the animals are subjected to cruelty. Mr Elungata cited that the conference was fundamental in addressing societal failings and in creating a better future for the animals and the human beings that care for them, fostering stronger co-existence.

He reflected on the previous seven conferences, mentioning that the co-hosting partnership of the African Union-InterAfrican Bureau of Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW), and the host governments had achieved much. He mentioned that the collaboration was a portrayal of the theme discussed in the conference, Partnership Actions to Improve Animal Welfare for Environmental Sustainability. He hoped that the partnership would be strengthened to address these issues in the upcoming years.

He relayed his congratulations to UNEP, AU-IBAR, and ANAW for the partnership which facilitated the establishment of the Animal Welfare, Environment, and Sustainable Development Nexus Resolution. The landmark achievement was an outcome of the conference that led to the adoption of the Animal Welfare, Environment, and Sustainable Development Nexus Resolution 5/1 at the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA) in March 2022.

He further stated that the 15th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP 15) to the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) in December 2022 adopted the Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF) for achievement by 2030. Successful implementation of the KM-GBF required active involvement of all actors of all sectors at all levels of society in a whole of government-whole of society approach including women and the youth to leverage on the impactful ingenious ideas that come forth from the demography.

Mr. Elungata announced that Kenya was committed to implementing the KM-GBF to address the ongoing loss of biodiversity and the resulting environmental challenges and was in the process of reviewing the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) to align with the KM-GBF. Kenya had also enacted various policies and legislations that covered animal welfare issues, one being the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (CAP 360) to provide for the advocacy against cruelty to animals and to control the experiments on animals amongst others. He mentioned that this focus demonstrated that animal welfare and its potential contributions to sustainable development were increasingly being recognized. It was hoped that this step would lead to better agency and ambition in protecting animals.

He cited that preserving the environment and ensuring a safe and healthy habitat for human beings and animals is crucial. The government had taken measures to meet its goal of planting 15 billion trees by 2032. This action has enabled the government to reduce greenhouse emissions, stopping and reversing deforestation and restoring 10.1 million hectares of deforested and degraded ecosystems and landscapes.

He further stated that in tackling the planetary crises, they had to realize that it could not be done without due consideration of animals and their welfare which improved human welfare and health, environmental health, and was critical towards the attainment of the sustainable goals. He explained that to achieve the established goal that focuses on the harmony of animal welfare, environment, and sustainability, humans needed to foster strong partnership. A partnership that calls for cooperation rather than confrontation. One that calls for proactiveness rather than a reactive response. He emphasized that this was the partnership that the Kenya Government believed in and was welcomed from all the stakeholders in this field.

Mr Elungata stated that strong partnerships would contribute to mobilizing resources, knowledge sharing, creation and transfer of sound technologies and strengthen good practices in animal welfare and environmental protection. He stated that the forum was a key step in increasing awareness of how the treatment of animals affected sustainable development, and how sustainable development challenged and impacted on animals. The partnership actions required that animal welfare and environmental sustainability improve in the whole of government-whole of society approach and ventured into how this could be translated into policy.

He concluded by calling on delegates to ensure that animals did not suffer and urged delegates to continue their efforts in aiming to be the voice of the voiceless. He called on everyone to discuss meaningful ways to collaborate and foster partnerships in solving challenges presented on human health, protecting the environment and achieving sustainable development - actions that will be propagated to future generations.



Goodwill Messages



CONFERENCE MODERATORS



Ms. Hellen Aura, Journalist, Nation Media Group



Mr. Josiah Ojwang, Conference Director, AAWC

Josiah Ojwang took the stage and introduced the session. He introduced his co-moderator, Hellen Aura, a journalist who worked with the largest Media House in Eastern Africa, the Nation Media Group. He stated that they would moderate the session for the following three days.

He went on to warmly welcome the delegates and invited representatives of key organizations to relay their Goodwill Messages.



INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE (IUCN)

Dr. Bois shared a compelling message on the vital role of animal welfare in achieving conservation and sustainable development across Africa. Dr. Bois began by congratulating the conveners and celebrating the partnerships dedicated to the animal welfare cause. He emphasized that animal welfare goes beyond compassion, serving as a cornerstone of conservation that supports balanced ecosystems, sustainable livelihoods, and the long-term wellbeing of communities.

Dr. Bois highlighted that protecting animal welfare directly influences biodiversity, as healthy animal populations are essential for ecosystem stability. By prioritizing animal welfare, human beings create an environment where diverse species could thrive, maintaining the intricate tapestry of life unique to the African continent. Furthermore, he noted that animal welfare is closely linked to the livelihoods, food security, and economic stability of African communities. Communities that respected and cared for animal welfare are often more inclined towards sustainable practices, which in turn protect habitats, promote productivity, and contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In his closing remarks, Dr. Bois underscored the deep cultural connections between African communities and nature, noting that championing animal welfare also strengthened these ties. He called upon delegates to collaborate and innovate, envisioning solutions that supported the humane treatment of animals and cultivate sustainable relationships with natural resources. Together, Dr. Bois urged stakeholders could act as changemakers, fostering actionable steps that benefit both animals and ecosystems for future generations.



Dr. Luther Anukur Bois, Regional Director, International Union for Conservation of Nature

ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE (AWI)

Ms Millward shared the organization's enduring mission and dedication to improving animal welfare globally. Established over 70 years ago, AWI envisions a world where animals live free from human-inflicted suffering. Ms Millward outlined AWI's efforts to enhance animal welfare across various sectors, including agriculture, wildlife, research, and community initiatives. Through collaboration with diverse stakeholders, AWI employs both scientific data and practical approaches to promote humane treatment and welfare improvements.



Ms Susan Millward, Chief Executive Officer, Animal Welfare Institute (AWI)

Ms Millward expressed AWI's appreciation for its long-standing relationship with the African Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW) and its support for the Africa Animal Welfare Conference (AAWC). She praised the conference for its commitment to advancing animal protection and reaching a broad audience of participants, both in person and online. Acknowledging ANAW's efforts, Ms Millward commended the team for creating an inclusive and impactful conference experience, bringing together a diverse community dedicated to the cause of animal welfare.

THE EUROPEAN UNION

Mr Gavinelli delivered a powerful message on the diverse and interconnected topics central to environmental sustainability and protection. He highlighted the leading role of African countries in implementing the UN resolution that acknowledges the critical role of sustainability, emphasizing that these countries set a global example. This leadership has encouraged a collective approach to environmental protection and animal welfare, reinforcing the importance of synergy across different regions.

Mr Gavinelli discussed Europe's recent initiatives, including a 2023 partnership focused on animal welfare. This partnership, which aims to address issues like emergency responses to animal cruelty while supporting farmers working with animals, merges scientific research, innovation, and public institutions. He pointed to the adoption of the new EU legislation aimed at strengthening the economic and market structure for animal welfare, especially in animal transport and related areas. These measures are designed to ensure that animal welfare is protected across sectors, impacting both animals and human communities.

In closing, Mr Gavinelli expressed optimism about the future of animal welfare as it expands into education, environmental conservation, and sustainable development. He conveyed his best wishes for a successful conference and hoped for continued collaboration to drive impactful progress in animal welfare.

THE WORLD BANK

Mr Berthe emphasized the organization's commitment to animal welfare, firmly rooted in the World Health Organization's (WHO) One Health concept, which recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health. He commended the conference's approach to advancing animal welfare as part of a larger framework for environmental and economic sustainability. Highlighting the World Bank's overarching mission to eradicate global poverty, Mr Berthe explained that animal welfare aligns with this mission by fostering harmony among people, animals, and ecosystems.

The World Bank, as a knowledge-driven and international financial institution, has developed a "Guide for Investment in Sustainable Livestock." This guide is used by on- the-ground teams and clients to address environmental, health, gender, and equity considerations in livestock projects. Incorporating international standards from WHO, FAO, and other NGOs, the guide emphasizes the economic advantages of investing in animal welfare, demonstrating how it enhances production, reduces the need for treatments, and lowers the risk of antimicrobial resistance. The World Bank's dedication to animal welfare extends to a significant investment portfolio, with USD \$2 billion currently allocated to projects that improve animal husbandry practices and upgrade slaughterhouses, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.



Franck Berthe, Senior Livestock Specialist, World Bank

Mr Berthe noted that the World Bank is actively expanding its commitment to the One Health approach through substantial initiatives, including a new USD \$1 billion project launching in West and Central Africa, underscoring the scale of the bank's engagement in animal welfare and public health.

Expressing his gratitude for the invitation to AAWC, he encouraged delegates to view the World Bank as a reliable partner in the global effort to advance animal welfare and sustainability.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)



*Ms. Daniela Battaglia, Livestock Production Officer,
Food and Agricultural Organization of the United
Nations (FAO)*

Ms. Battaglia extended her congratulations to the organizers and participants for their commitment to improving the welfare of people, animals, and the environment in Africa, expressing regret for her inability to attend in person due to scheduling conflicts. She acknowledged the efforts of FAO and the UN in selecting this year's theme, which emphasizes the links between animal welfare, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and environmental sustainability.

Ms. Battaglia highlighted how prioritizing animal welfare was essential for achieving economic and social sustainability, stressing that collaboration was key to making life more sustainable.

She praised the conference's focus on partnerships, referencing successful collaborations with organizations such as the World Bank, International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), World Organisation for Animals (WOAH), and universities around the globe, noting the impact of these partnerships. According to Ms. Battaglia, the conference theme underscores the critical role of animal welfare in promoting sustainable societies and offers a platform to demonstrate the importance of a One Health approach. She concluded by emphasizing that animal welfare not only contributes to the health of animals but also to the welfare of people and the planet.



WORLD FEDERATION FOR ANIMALS (WFA)



Dr. James Yeates, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), World Federation for Animals (WFA)

Dr. Yeates commended the conference organizers, recognizing the event as a pivotal moment in advancing how animals are treated globally. He emphasized that improving animal welfare is a critical response to current crises, including climate change and pollution. Highlighting UNEP's progress on its resolution for sustainable development, as well as FAO's Sustainable Livestock Transformation Projects, he noted the importance of these initiatives in fostering sustainable practices and addressing challenges like Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR).

Dr. Yeates explained that treating animals humanely is essential to building a sustainable future, as outlined in the recent political declaration on AMR. He underscored the need for holistic solutions, achieved only through collaboration—an aspect embodied by the conference. He urged delegates to listen, learn, plan, commit, and implement together, emphasizing that these actions are crucial both within Africa and beyond its borders.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)



Dr. Bernadette Abela-Ridder, Team Leader - Neglected Zoonotic Diseases, World Health Organization (WHO)

Dr. Abela-Ridder delivered an insightful message on the interconnected nature of health, emphasizing that health encompasses complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing, not simply the absence of disease. She highlighted the importance of a One Health approach, which acknowledges the close links between human, animal, and environmental health. Dr. Abela-Ridder noted that sustainable development requires balancing efforts to improve equity and alleviate poverty, alongside managing trade-offs in food security and climate change. She emphasized that addressing these challenges calls for widespread behavior change and collaboration across sectors, with everyone playing a role in creating effective solutions.

Dr. Abela-Ridder drew attention to the need for compassion in dealing with animals, particularly in efforts to eliminate diseases like rabies. She underscored the importance of educating children as future leaders who would promote compassionate practices, noting that instilling a better understanding of animal welfare in youth is vital for sustaining humane behavior within communities.

In closing, Dr. Abela-Ridder expressed her commitment to integrating conference recommendations into WHO's programs, stressing the need for animal welfare to be a key component in daily life and community initiatives.

WORLD ORGANIZATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (WOAH)



Dr. Neo Mapitse gave a speech on behalf of Dr. Patrick Bastiaensen, WOAH Programme Officer (Eastern Africa)

Dr Neo Mapitse, WOAH Sub-Regional Representative for Eastern Africa

Dr. Neo Mapitse began by stating that the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) had played a pivotal role in the animal welfare sector for several decades, contributing to the establishment of numerous standards and reaffirming its commitment to animal welfare. WOAH continues to build capacity in this field through renewed resolutions and partnerships with organizations such as the African Union - Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), as well as through specialized training for animal welfare focal points.

He stated that WOAH's standards define animal welfare as the physical and mental state of animals in relation to their living and dying conditions. In 2017, WOAH adopted the first global Animal Welfare Strategy, which was built on strategic pillars aimed at fostering a world where animal welfare is respected, promoted, and advanced. Dr. Bastiaensen noted that this strategy emphasizes the link between animal welfare, human health, socio-economic development, and environmental sustainability.

The strategic pillars guide member countries in developing and enforcing localized animal welfare strategies. An example of this is the Rwanda Animal Welfare Strategy, which allows for local adaptation of WOAH standards while considering regional, socio-economic, and religious diversities. Further, Africa as a region, has made commendable progress, with several sub-regional strategies already adopted or under review.

Dr. Mapitse concluded that the approach enhances political participation and engages governments in promoting animal welfare while addressing pressing global challenges, including climate change, desertification, and extreme weather events.

AFRICA ANIMAL WELFARE CONFERENCE IMPACT REVIEW: A LOOK AT THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



Dr. David Obiero, Lecturer, Maasai Mara University

Dr. Obiero's review of the Africa Animal Welfare Conference presented a comprehensive look at its influence across African countries over the years, emphasizing the event's role in connecting animal welfare, human health, and sustainability. Since its inception, the conference has seen participation from mostly African countries, creating a platform that highlights animal welfare as an integral part of both public health and ethical food systems. 75% of the conferences' resolutions have focused on strengthening animal welfare legislation, with particular emphasis on the One Health One Welfare approach.

The delegates predominantly represent academia, research institutions, and NGOs. These groups have played a critical role in driving awareness, collaboration, and advocacy for animal welfare across Africa. The conference has significantly impacted organizational programs, facilitated partnerships, and advanced the development of new initiatives. This has fostered increased awareness around animal welfare issues and provided delegates with access to resources that support their work.

One notable shift influenced by the conference has been the growing advocacy against cage-based practices in food production, which has placed pressure on the industry to adopt more ethical standards. The conference's impact has also extended to the global arena, advancing awareness of animal welfare issues and contributing to the adoption of resolutions focused on the animal welfare nexus in regional dialogues.

Feedback from the previous conferences' evaluation reveals that 55% of respondents have since established new collaborations and strengthened their relationships with government bodies.

Looking ahead, Dr. Obiero emphasized the importance of increased government engagement to expand the reach of animal welfare initiatives across Africa. Dr. Obiero stated that additional funding and partnerships would be essential in sustaining and growing animal welfare work, ensuring a continued focus on animal welfare as an integral aspect of sustainable development on the continent.



**SESSION 1: INNOVATIONS,
EDUCATION AND EMERGING
TRENDS IN ANIMAL WELFARE**



Session Moderator:

**Prof. James Herbert Williams, PhD,
MSW, MPA, Arizona State University,
USA**



Prof. James Herbert Williams, PhD, MSW, MPA, Arizona State University, USA

SUSTAINABLE PLANT-BASED FOOD SYSTEMS

Ms. Abigail Mukonyo began her presentation by introducing Thrive Philanthropy, a global grant-making organization that supports sustainable, plant-based food systems. Thrive Philanthropy strengthened frontline organizations and connects impact-driven donors with over 300 food justice advocates across more than 70 countries. She explained that plant-based food systems focused on agricultural and natural practices that prioritize the cultivation and consumption of plant-derived foods, extending from production to processing. She highlighted the need to invest in expanding these systems, noting their potential to reduce reliance on animal agriculture and promote animal welfare. She emphasized that such systems could lead to more sustainable and humane practices in food production, benefiting both human beings and animals.



Ms. Abigail Mukonyo, Executive Co-ordinator, Thrive Philanthropy

Ms Mukonyo outlined the key components of sustainable plant-based food systems, starting with social and ethical considerations. These considerations stressed the importance of animal welfare, as shifting to plant-based food systems reduces the need for animal agriculture and fosters humane treatment of animals. Additionally, she touched on the importance of food justice, which addressed inequalities in food access, ensuring that vulnerable groups, especially, have equitable access to plant-based foods.

She then discussed food processing, stressing on the value of minimal processing and focusing on whole foods. She mentioned innovations like plant-based meats and dairy products, which provided nutritious alternatives to traditional animal-based foods and support sustainable food systems. Next, she focused on nutrition and health, noting that plant-based diets are rich in essential nutrients and offer numerous health benefits. These diets could lower the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes, conditions often linked to high-fat animal-based diets.

Ms Mukonyo also emphasized the role of culinary practices in promoting plant-based foods. She suggested that promoting culturally relevant recipes, particularly within African contexts, could challenge the perception that plant-based diets were for people who cannot afford meat. By showcasing plant-based dishes that were familiar and delicious, more people could be encouraged to adopt plant-based diets.

Turning to economic considerations, she pointed out that the shift to plant-based food systems opened new economic opportunities. This transition supported farmers, producers, and consumers by creating jobs, boosting local economies, and providing affordable food options. She noted that plant-based foods were often more affordable than animal-based ones, easing economic pressures, especially in developing regions.

Ms Mukonyo then discussed the environmental sustainability of plant-based food systems, highlighting the efficient use of resources such as water, land, and energy. She explained that sustainable agricultural practices, like crop diversity and the promotion of drought-resistant crops like sorghum, conserved resources, reduced waste, and supported environmental stewardship. She also addressed the importance of policy and advocacy in the success of plant-based food systems. She emphasized the need for policies that supported plant-based agriculture, public awareness campaigns, and community involvement in decision-making processes. Thrive Philanthropy recognized that engaging communities was vital to ensuring that people not only understood the benefits of plant-based food systems but also actively participated in their implementation.

Ms Mukonyo concluded by discussing global perspectives, mentioning Thrive Philanthropy's African Vegan Restaurant Week, which successfully involved over 30 organizations from 15 countries. The event showcased plant-based food's potential in Africa and fostered global solidarity in food justice. Ms Mukonyo concluded her presentation by outlining the numerous benefits of sustainable plant-based food systems whose diets promote better health by reducing the risk of chronic diseases and providing essential nutrients. It was also of great benefit to the environment as plant-based food systems led to a smaller carbon footprint than animal-based ones. This provided new opportunities for farmers and producers.



JUST TRANSITION FROM INDUSTRIAL ANIMAL PRODUCTION TO EQUITABLE, HUMANE AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS



Dr Patrick Muinde, Research Manager, World Animal Protection

Dr. Patrick Muinde began by highlighting two key areas of focus: transforming global food systems and ending commercial wildlife exploitation. He explained that these two systems were major contributors to animal suffering and addressing them presented a significant opportunity to improve the lives of animals. Dr. Muinde stressed the need to transition from industrial animal agriculture. He explained that this system, often referred to as factory farming or Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), was fundamentally flawed because it profited from animal suffering, prioritizing profit over the well-being of the animals.

Dr. Muinde further illustrated the harsh conditions animals endured in industrial farming, describing how they were kept in cages with poor ventilation, limited social interaction, and no ability to engage in natural behaviors. For example, pigs in such systems were deprived of the ability to socialize or wallow in mud, both of which were essential to their well-being. In contrast, he showed a photo of a farm in Kenya that employed better farming practices, where animals were provided with an environment that improves their quality of life. He emphasized that while both systems produced animals for food, the right system offered a far better experience for the animals involved.



Dr. Muinde then introduced the concept of welfare domains, which expounded on the Five traditional Freedoms of Animal Welfare by incorporating mental and emotional experiences. He explained that, as sentient beings, animals had the ability to suffer, think, and remember. Therefore, emotional needs were as crucial as physical ones when it came to ensuring the well-being of animals. Dr. Muinde detailed five key domains that impact animal welfare: nutrition, physical environment, health, behavioral interactions, and mental state, which when addressed, would improve the overall welfare of animals in food production systems.

He also discussed important trends influencing food production, noting that Africa was projected to host 25% of the world's population by 2050. This demographic shift would likely lead to increased demand for animal-based products. However, he cautioned that this rise in demand could transform Africa's livestock sector towards more industrialized systems, which often mirror the factory farming practices seen in other parts of the world.

Dr. Muinde further illustrated the difference between high-welfare production systems and industrial ones. He noted that chickens, for example, were naturally curious and love to explore, but factory farming confined them to cages, depriving them of their natural behaviors. High-welfare systems, often seen on small-scale farms, allow animals to roam freely, socialize, and engage in behaviors that were crucial to their well-being. In these systems, farmers were more connected to the animals, allowing them to better understand their needs and provide individualized care.

The discussion then turned to the global risks associated with industrial farming, particularly the role it played in the emergence of pandemics and zoonotic diseases. Dr. Muinde pointed out that diseases such as, avian influenza, and swine flu originated from factory farming, where animals were kept in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions. He explained that these environments fostered the spread of pathogens, which could mutate and spill over to humans. He stressed that up to 60% of diseases were zoonotic, and 75% of new pandemics were likely to be of zoonotic origin. This reality underscores the need for a fundamental shift in how human beings produce food to prevent future health crises.

Dr. Muinde stressed the use of antibiotics in factory farming. The extreme confinement and poor living conditions of animals led to stress, which weakened their immune systems. To combat this, farmers often resorted to using antibiotics as a preventive measure. However, this overuse of antibiotics contributed to the growing problem of antibiotic resistance, which caused 1.27 million deaths annually. Without action, this number was expected to rise to 10 million in the future.

Dr. Muinde touched on the environmental impacts of factory farming, particularly the production of animal feed. He explained how forests were being cleared to grow feed crops like soy and corn, contributing to biodiversity loss and environmental pollution. The fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides used in this process further harmed the environment, highlighting the inefficiency and unsustainability of industrial animal agriculture.

In contrast, he emphasized the importance of ensuring that animals in factory farms, as well as those outside these systems, live better lives. He called for a food system that respects both animals and nature, one that is equitable, humane, and sustainable. This system would prioritize high welfare standards, responsible resource use, and the protection of biodiversity.

Dr. Muinde concluded by proposing several levels of change to address the challenges facing global food systems through; strengthening food systems governance to ensure that small farmers have a place in the food system and that agroecological practices are promoted. He also called for a shift toward food systems that operated within planetary and social boundaries. He expressed his belief that, together, human beings could transform food systems to protect animals, people, and the planet. He issued a call to action for civil society organizations, urging them to mobilize support and advocate for equitable, humane, and sustainable food systems, especially in policymaking.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) COLLABORATIONS TO PROTECT ANIMALS AND THE ENVIRONMENT



Yolanda Eisenstein, President, Animal Law Commission

Yolanda Eisenstein delivered an insightful talk on the intersection of wildlife conservation and Artificial Intelligence (AI), emphasizing its potential to transform human beings' understanding and protection of biodiversity. She began by highlighting the critical importance of safeguarding wildlife, particularly in regions teeming with diverse species, and outlined how emerging technologies like AI could foster collaboration and partnerships to address conservation challenges.

Eisenstein provided an accessible introduction to AI, defining it as the simulation of human intelligence by machines, a concept that had been evolving for decades. She elaborated on its key components: machine learning, which enabled computers to learn and improve from experience; neural networks, which mimicked the structure and

function of the human brain and deep learning, a cutting-edge advancement that allowed for detailed analysis of extensive datasets. She also touched on generative AI, a technology that was capable of producing language, images, and other outputs, and discussed artificial general intelligence, a concept where AI could one day replicate human-like thinking prospects.

Shifting focus to wildlife conservation, Eisenstein described how AI was revolutionizing the field. She shared compelling examples, such as research conducted by the Cornell Lab, which uses AI to confirm that elephants communicated through distinctive calls. These findings scientifically validated that animals possessed complex forms of communication. The Earth Species Project was another organization she highlighted which leveraged AI to decode the "languages" of various species, sounds amidst the cacophony of natural environments. Such advancements enabled researchers to focus on specific species without interference from background noise, significantly improving study accuracy.

Eisenstein further explained how passive acoustic monitoring, another AI application, allowed researchers to observe animal behaviors in their natural habitats without causing disruptions. Unlike traditional methods that often involved invasive tools like cameras and traps, passive monitoring provided a non-intrusive way to gather data, preserving the integrity of ecosystems.

She also discussed "Wild Me," a Portland-based initiative using AI for non-invasive wildlife tracking, a program that employed advanced imaging and pattern recognition techniques like human facial recognition, to identify individual animals based on unique patterns like stripes or spots. Such methods eliminated the need for invasive tracking devices, such as collars or tags, and enhanced human beings' ability to monitor endangered species' populations and migrations. Eisenstein praised the initiative's integration of citizen photography, which allowed amateur photographers to contribute images to a global database, fostering community involvement in conservation efforts.

While emphasizing the promise of AI, Eisenstein also addressed its ethical implications and potential risks. She warned of the dangers of unchecked AI development, such as the possibility of outpacing regulatory frameworks, lack of transparency, and inherent biases, both human and animal. She stressed that ethical concerns must remain central to AI applications, particularly in conservation. She noted that some people feared AI's rapid advancement could lead to unintended consequences, and that its misuse could jeopardize both human and animal welfare.

Eisenstein underscored the need for collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including researchers, developers, advocates, and lawmakers. She advocated for forming partnerships to ensure that AI technologies are developed responsibly, with clear objectives and safeguards. She also urged animal advocates to actively engage with AI developers and policymakers to address gaps in regulation and ethical oversight, while educating the public about both the potential and the risks of AI in conservation.

To conclude, Eisenstein stated that while technology still had a place in the world, several factors needed to be considered before introducing high-tech tools. She emphasized that while AI offered remarkable opportunities to advance conservation, its application required guidance through thoughtful deliberation, robust regulation, and unwavering ethical principles to ensure it truly benefited the natural world.



BUILDING A MORE HUMANE COMMUNITY THROUGH HUMAN- ANIMAL CONNECTION



Prof. Philip Tedeschi, Co-Director, Institute for Animal Sentience and Protection

Prof. Philip Tedeschi expressed his honor in contributing to efforts aimed at expanding social scientific understanding of the cognitive and emotional lives of non-human animals. He noted that many countries had begun formally recognizing non-human animal sentience and establishing legal frameworks that acknowledged animals as more than property or objects. However, he lamented that the United States lagged behind in this regard.

He began by addressing a fundamental barrier to progress - human arrogance, explaining that humans had developed strategies to “other” non-human animals, often refusing to acknowledge their cognitive and emotional capacities. Through the science of sentience, it had become evident that humans were not exceptional; rather, they shared many of these capacities with other animals.

Professor Tedeschi highlighted the concept of humane communities, which he defined as the presence of leaders, institutions, and policies working collaboratively to address the intersections between sustainable practices and the welfare of humans, animals, and the environment. He emphasized that understanding these intersections was fundamental to advancing animal welfare. He shared research findings that the root causes of oppression and discrimination affecting humans, such as poverty, racial and economic segregation, and housing issues, also significantly impacted animals. Power dynamics, oppressive practices like policing, and the criminalization of certain behaviors further exacerbated these challenges. His studies revealed how social justice issues were intricately linked to animal well-being.

One notable study was the Pets for Life program, conducted with the Humane Society of the United States, which demonstrated that improving human well-being had measurable benefits for animals and the environment. The research dispelled assumptions that interest in animal welfare was limited to specific racial or ethnic groups, showing that it spanned diverse communities. The program focused on three core areas: animals in communities, therapeutic human-animal interactions, and One Health-informed social work practices.

Prof. Tedeschi explained the concept of the human-animal bond, first articulated by veterinarian, Dr. Leo Bustad, as mutually beneficial relationships between people and animals. He cited examples such as therapy dogs assisting at-risk children with developmental and reading challenges and their use in hospitals to support patients undergoing cancer treatment or managing chronic pain. His team evaluated these programs, finding substantial evidence of their effectiveness in improving both human and animal outcomes.

In his work on trauma-informed care, outlined in his 2020 publication *Transforming Trauma*, Professor Tedeschi explored the role of animals in fostering resilience and healing among individuals who had experienced trauma. He highlighted the Big Fix Uganda Comfort Dog Program, which paired street dogs with survivors of the Ugandan civil war. Research demonstrated that this initiative significantly improved the psychological health of survivors while strengthening human-animal relationships.

He further elaborated on the neurobiological impacts of animals, noting their ability to reduce loneliness and isolation—critical factors in mental health. Studies indicated that animals could serve as valuable components of social support systems, not limited to human connections. His research also examined the role of animals in prison settings, showing improved outcomes for incarcerated individuals, including reduced recidivism rates and enhanced emotional well-being.

Prof. Tedeschi emphasized the importance of keeping people and animals together during crises. He referenced the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, where the refusal of many individuals to evacuate without their companion animals led to tragic consequences. This event prompted the creation of the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act, mandating that rescue services include provisions for animals during natural disasters.

On the darker side of the human-animal bond, he discussed how violence against animals often predicted broader societal violence. Historical concepts like “battered child syndrome” and “battered women syndrome” were expanded to include animals, revealing strong correlation between harm to animals and harm to humans.

On a global scale, Prof. Tedeschi noted the psychological toll of environmental degradation. He argued that harm to animals and the environment had profound negative impacts on human mental health.

Despite advancements, Prof. Tedeschi lamented that laws regarding animals remain outdated, insufficient, or non-existent in many parts of the world. He called for a shift beyond the “Five Freedoms” and the “Five Domains” frameworks, arguing that they represented minimal standards. He asserted that true progress required a legal paradigm shift that acknowledges animals as more than property, a status that perpetuates their commodification.

To conclude, Prof. Tedeschi urged society to embrace its most humane capacities by recognizing the interconnectedness of life and addressing the challenges facing animals, humans, and the environment. He expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to share his insights and encouraged the audience to explore the powerful work of organizations that document the experiences of animals in human society.

ANIMAL WELFARE PERSPECTIVES FROM ASIA

Jeff Zhou, in his presentation at the conference, shared insights into animal welfare from an Asian perspective, particularly emphasizing the role of Compassion in World Farming (CIWF), driven by three core goals: *“Transitioning from factory farming to regenerative farming that works in harmony with nature and animals, reducing the reliance on animal products by promoting plant-based diets and encouraging the consumption of less meat, fish, and dairy, raising global awareness on the importance of animal welfare in creating a climate-friendly, sustainable food system.”*

Mr. Zhou highlighted the challenges Asia, like Africa, faces in balancing development with compassion for animals. However, he also emphasized the shared lessons between the two regions. In terms of progress in Asia, Mr Zhou mentioned the role of the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) and its Regional Animal Welfare Advisory Group, which guided countries toward adopting humane animal welfare practices.

Although Asia faced implementation challenges, this advisory platform was pivotal for change. Zhou also mentioned Asia for Animals Coalition, a key organization in advancing the discussion on animal welfare in modern Asian societies. One of its cornerstone events is the Asia for Animals Conference, which serves as a major gathering for advocates, providing a platform for sharing best practices, strengthening partnerships, and collaborating across the region.

Mr Zhou then discussed CIWF's strategic efforts through various working groups including Alternative Protein Working Group which focused on developing national strategies for alternative proteins, Corporate Engagement Working Group which had used the global cage-free movement to encourage companies to adopt animal welfare- friendly practices, and Policy Engagement Working Group that worked with policymakers to improve legislative frameworks for farm animal welfare.

In his discussion on China, Mr Zhou pointed out the country's status as one of the largest producers and consumers of livestock, which presented challenges in advocating for animal welfare. Advocacy in China had to consider the cultural heritage which emphasized harmony between humans and nature. Mr Zhou linked these values to African philosophies like Ubuntu, underscoring the shared cultural foundations that could support animal welfare advocacy in both regions. He noted that Chinese classical poetry often reflected respect for animals and the environment, thus offering a cultural link to contemporary advocacy.

CIWF's approach in China revolved around three main pillars: policy, industry, and consumer awareness. This included engaging students at all levels of education to raise awareness about global food system challenges, encouraging collaboration with industry stakeholders to improve animal welfare standards, and developing partnerships with local research institutions to encourage localized research on animal welfare.



Mr. Jeff Zhou, Compassion in World Farming

Mr. Zhou concluded by addressing the broader issues facing Asia, including the significant challenges posed by intensive farming systems. He drew attention to the need for sustainable farming practices, highlighting the similarities in challenges between Asia and Africa, such as environmental degradation, food insecurity, and inequality. He stressed that both regions had an opportunity to pursue compassionate farming practices that could preserve biodiversity, health, and equity, thus avoiding the mistakes made in the West's intensive farming model. The key question for both regions, Mr. Zhou posed, was how to feed growing populations sustainably without compromising the welfare of animals or the well-being of communities.



HUMANE INNOVATIONS AND REPLACEMENT: CASE STUDIES TO ILLUSTRATE THE CURRICULUM OF AN IDEAL VETERINARY DEGREE



Mr. Nick Jukes, Veterinary Consultant, National Council of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. (NSPCA)

Mr Nick Jukes presented an extensive discussion on the transformative potential of humane innovations and replacements in veterinary education, emphasizing how these approaches are reshaping the structure and quality of training for veterinary students. Representing InterNICHE, an organization dedicated to promoting humane, innovative teaching methods, Mr Jukes highlighted their work with educators, students, and advocates globally to implement tools that prioritize ethical practices, technical excellence, and the overall welfare of animals.

He described the goal of replacing harmful animal use in education, such as experimentation, with innovative alternatives. These alternatives, he stressed, served as tools for delivering education rather than being mere subjects of study. The focus remained on pedagogical objectives - ensuring students acquired the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes while simultaneously upholding the principles of animal welfare.

Mr Jukes outlined a structured approach to achieving a humane veterinary degree, starting from foundational subjects such as anatomy and physiology, advancing through clinical skills and surgery, and culminating in real-world clinical training with animal patients in therapeutic settings. This progression enabled students to master core competencies incrementally, preparing them to excel in practice without the need for traditional animal-based methods.

He then shared the documentary film series, DVM Training the Animal Doctor, produced by InterNICHE, which showcases the application of humane teaching tools worldwide. The series provided case studies illustrating the integration of alternatives in various disciplines, using global examples from Latin America, North America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. It featured interviews with educators, demonstrations of tools, and footage of practical training sessions.

Mr Jukes shared clips from this episode, highlighting the model's effectiveness in enabling students to learn from their mistakes and refine their techniques in a controlled environment.

He highlighted various innovative tools and techniques being employed globally to enhance veterinary education while maintaining ethical standards. In anatomy training, alternatives such as clay modeling helped visualize musculature, while advanced tools like Virtual Reality (VR) systems offered immersive experiences. Non-invasive methods, including body painting for biomechanics, and the use of ethically sourced animal remains through donation programs, like the national initiative in the Netherlands, were also discussed. For physiology and pharmacology, Mr Jukes showcased virtual labs simulating experiments traditionally conducted on live animals, such as frog nerve and muscle studies, alongside non-invasive experiments performed on students.

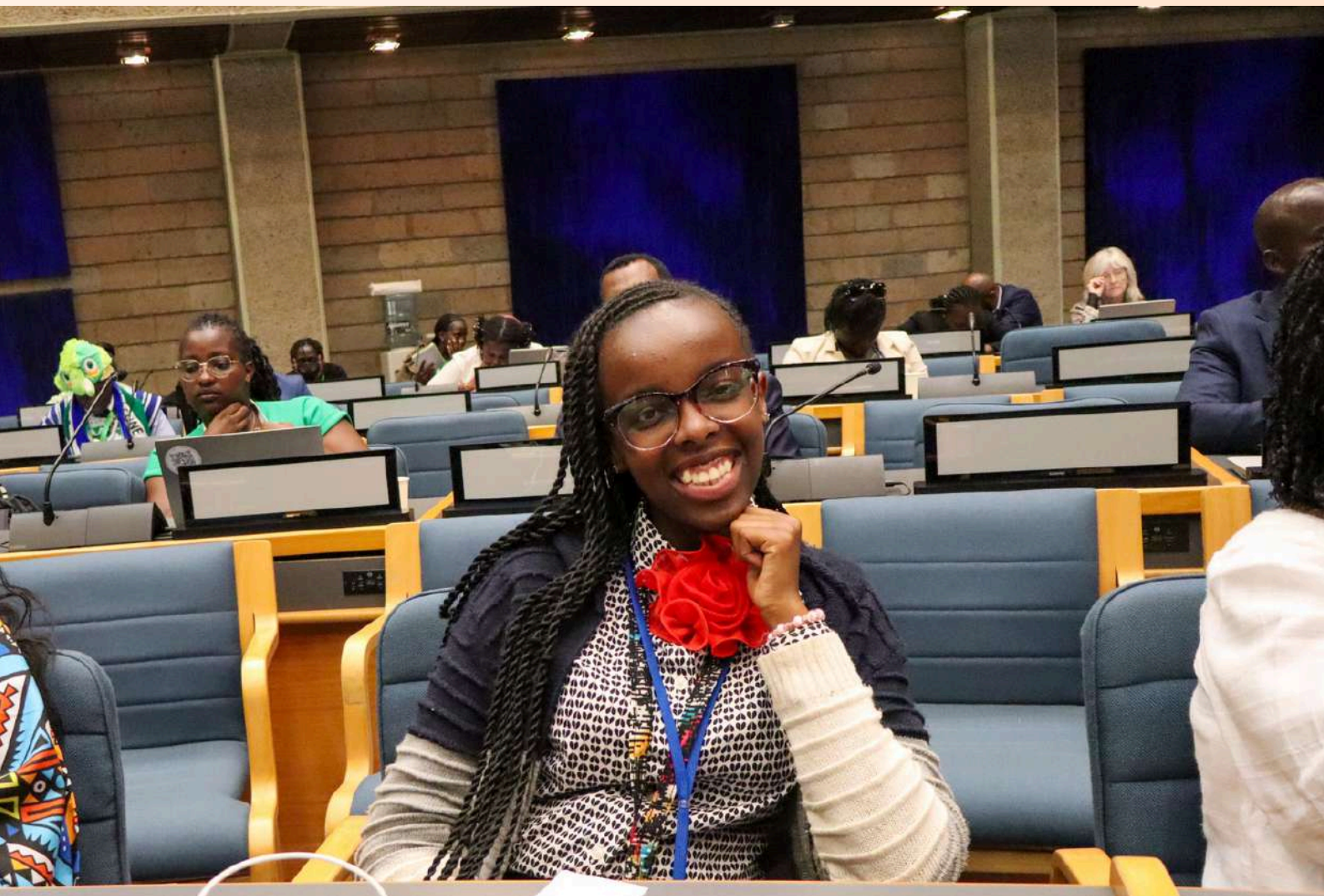
Clinical skills and surgery training benefit from progression starting with low-fidelity models for basic skills and advancing to high-fidelity mannequins for complex procedures. Tools like CPR mannequins, perfused animal cadavers, and VR systems with haptic feedback were highlighted as essential for developing competence. Lastly, clinical rotations with real patients provided students with hands-on experience in therapeutic environments, emphasizing practical application without the need for experimental animal use.

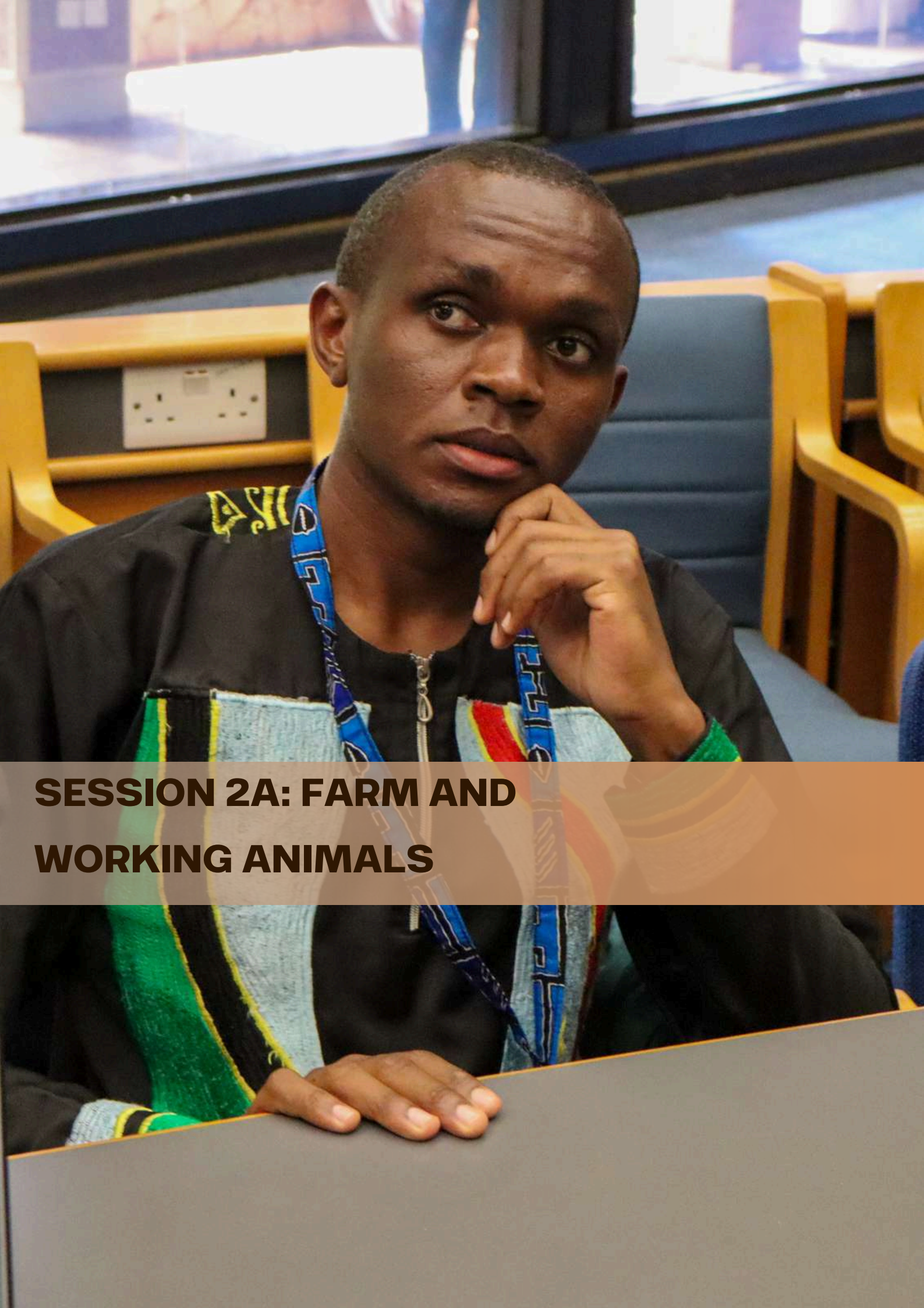
Mr Jukes underscored the global nature of these developments, mentioning outreach programs like spay-neuter initiatives in Kenya, which involve international collaborations. These programs not only provide practical training but also address community challenges, such as controlling diseases like rabies and distemper, enhancing both public health and conservation efforts.

Mr Jukes argued that a humane veterinary degree is not only achievable but also superior in ensuring animal welfare and preparing graduates to be better veterinarians. These approaches align with sustainable development goals, promoting quality education, good health, and ethical practices.

He concluded by introducing the Lush Prize report on animal experimentation and alternatives in Africa. This report examined historical and contemporary trends, including the influence of colonialism, and offers insights into the potential for widespread adoption of humane practices across the continent.

Mr Jukes invited delegates to explore the resources available through InterNICHE, including a growing database of videos and thematic clips from the documentary series, and to urge the delegates to join the movement towards fully humane education systems.





**SESSION 2A: FARM AND
WORKING ANIMALS**

Session Moderator

Session 2A was moderated by Ms. Rubina James. Three (3) speakers provided insight into critical aspects of animal welfare in Africa, covering egg production trends, trainings on farmed animal welfare, and rabies control in urban settings.



MS. Rubina James, Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG)

PROGRESS OF CAGE-FREE CHICKEN CAMPAIGNS IN AFRICA



Ms. Aurelia Adhiambo, Africa Lead, Open Wing Alliance

Ms. Adhiambo addressed the current and future status of egg production in Africa. As Africa's population rapidly expanded and its middle class grew, the demand for eggs was projected to increase significantly, necessitating a re-evaluation of production practices. 70% of commercial egg production in sub-Saharan Africa was cage-free, largely due to small and medium-scale farmers using "deep litter systems." However, rapid industrialization and foreign investments, like those from Quantum Foods, were driving a rise in battery cage use.

Ms. Adhiambo noted that Africans consumed 44 eggs per capita annually, which was four times below the global average, indicating room for growth in demand. She advocated for cage-free systems as a sustainable solution, allowing hens to engage in natural behaviors like dust bathing and wing stretching, and reducing the need for antibiotics. She pointed to Rwanda's poultry industry as a success story, with 67% growth from 2010 to 2020 in cage-free production. To support cage-free environments, Adhiambo recommended that governments regulate the industry and establish model farms and training programs.

IMPLEMENTING FARMED ANIMAL WELFARE TRAINING: SUCCESSES, EXPERIENCES AND SCALE-UP



Dr. Kikiopé Oluwarore, Founder and Director, Nigeria's One Health and Development Initiative

Dr Oluwarore shared insights on implementing farmed animal welfare training to address gaps in awareness and best practices. She emphasized that half of African households depended on farmed livestock for food security, nutrition, and income, yet animal welfare remains a largely neglected area.

Her organization's solution involved a participatory training program designed to enhance awareness, knowledge, and capacity in global best practices (GBPs) for farmed animals.

The training targeted a diverse group of stakeholders, including farmers, veterinarians, policymakers, and students. Implementation involved developing training guides specific to various animal species, with existing materials for fish and chickens, and guides for pigs, bovines, and caprines in progress.

The program used an online platform with Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions, action plans, and feedback loops, allowing for bi-directional learning where feedback from farmers informs the scaling process. Dr. Oluwarore's team published evidence of their impact to encourage replication in different contexts. They also fostered partnerships, especially through the Africa Farmed Animal Welfare Advocacy Fellowship, with a focus on fish welfare.

HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERFACE IN URBAN AREAS: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO REDUCING THE TRANSMISSION OF RABIES IN MASVINGO, ZIMBABWE

Ms Makuvishe presented on the human-animal interface and efforts to control rabies in Masvingo, Zimbabwe, using a holistic, community-based approach. Rabies, a viral and zoonotic disease, remained a significant public health challenge, particularly affecting children under 15, who make up 40% of those infected. With a rabies fatality rate of 100% once it reached the central nervous system, and a low national vaccination rate of 11%, the threat was high in Masvingo, a densely populated area with a significant number of stray dogs.



Ms. Nancy Makuvishe, Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe

Efforts to curb rabies in Masvingo was a project carried out under WHO's One Health framework and included mass dog vaccination, increased Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), and community engagement. The efforts reduced stray dog populations humanely, replacing traditional methods like night time culling. Interventions included educating residents about rabies, vaccinating and spaying/neutering animals, and managing human-animal conflicts. Policies had been strengthened to mandate spay/neuter, limited dogs per household, and enforced registration and vaccination requirements.

Ms. Makuise also highlighted the importance of digital surveillance and mobile health services, which used data analytics to track outbreaks and provide local access to veterinary care, even sending American Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (ASPCA) veterinarians into communities when needed. Collaborative governance involving local councils, the ASPCA, and the government had helped implement these interventions. The holistic One Health approach prioritized reducing rabies transmission while promoting animal welfare and reducing healthcare costs through preventive measures.

In summary, the session provided a broad perspective on the pressing issues in animal welfare across Africa. Speakers recommended policy support for cage-free egg production, expanding welfare training programs, and engaging communities in rabies prevention, all of which emphasized the interconnected nature of animal and human welfare.



QUESTION AND ANSWERS

Comment: Judge Fred Ochieng expressed concern over the practice of shooting stray animals and emphasized the benefits of natural laying systems for poultry. However, he acknowledged the associated costs of implementing such systems.

What factors should be considered when determining household dog limits?

Ms. Makuvise acknowledged the persistent issue of shooting stray animals but pointed to gradual progress towards implementing more humane practices. In response to a question about limiting the number of dogs per household, Ms. Makuvise explained that a collaborative approach had led to the recommendation of a four-dog limit per household. This limit ensures that dog owners can provide adequate care and prevent overpopulation. Ms. Makuvise advocated for humane alternatives to culling, underscoring the importance of education, community engagement, and stakeholder collaboration in promoting animal welfare.

Ms. Makuvise clarified that consultations with veterinarians, community members, and NGOs were central to the decision to determine household dog limits. The focus was on ensuring proper welfare and addressing the challenges of managing large dog populations within communities.

How can farmers balance animal welfare with production limitations, particularly when constrained by property size? Does the practice of caging fish, while avoiding caged hens, present a contradiction?

Dr. Kikiope Oluwarore explained that cage-free housing benefits chickens' welfare by allowing them to exhibit natural behaviors. She noted, however, that fish welfare requires different considerations, such as water quality and space. She emphasized that optimal enclosure conditions must meet the specific needs of each species.

Dr. Oluwarore highlighted that transitioning to cage-free systems brings long-term benefits for animal welfare. This balance must also account for farmers' financial constraints, recommending ethical practices that consider both the animals' needs and the sustainability of agricultural systems. Dr. Oluwarore emphasized the importance of balancing stocking density with animal welfare needs, particularly in aquaculture. Ms. Adhiambo addressed the challenges of managing deep litter systems in poultry and highlighted the role of government and NGO support in advancing cage-free systems.

Please address the integration of the One Health approach with the culling of stray dogs and the rationale behind mandatory vaccination programs.

Ms. Makuvise explained that while advocacy for the One Health approach continues, mandatory vaccination remains necessary due to the low response to voluntary programs. She noted that the presence of stray animals is exacerbated by illegal breeders, and a regulatory approach is crucial for effective population health management.

Comment: Faith-based organizations could play a pivotal role in raising awareness about animal welfare.

Dr. Oluwarore and Ms. Adhiambo agreed, citing the impact of radio broadcasts and religious leaders in reaching wider audiences. Makuvise expressed interest in exploring faith-based interventions to encourage a cultural shift towards recognizing animal sentience and promoting humane practices.



What are the measures to ensure humane practices for controlling stray populations and securing legal protection for dogs?

Ms. Makuvise recommended strengthening legislation, including fines and penalties, as deterrents to inhumane practices. She emphasized the importance of establishing legal requirements for vaccination and care standards to ensure the protection of animals and the promotion of animal welfare.

Closing Remark:

Ms. Rubina James concluded by highlighting the significance of financial resources in implementing effective animal welfare policies. She stressed that securing adequate funding is crucial to achieving the objectives of the conference and ensuring that animal welfare initiatives are sustained in the long term.



SESSION 2B: FARM AND WORKING ANIMALS



**Ms Alexis Olds, CEO,
Compassion in World Farming,
Southern Africa**



AFRICAN UNION DECISION ON DONKEY SPECIES PRESERVATION IN AFRICA

The speaker took the opportunity to share on donkey welfare from the AU-IBAR perspective. He stated that donkeys were first domesticated in Africa which makes them a true African livestock, and a heritage of the continent. He informed the delegates that donkeys were hunted for their skins which was believed to have medicinal properties, but this was unsustainable as they had low fertility and long reproduction cycles. There are no viable alternatives for donkeys especially since their users come from low infrastructure areas and lack capital for alternatives.

Dr Boussini stated that the Steering Technical Committee (STC), ministers and government representatives, declared a ban of the mass slaughter of donkeys at the conference of November 14-17, 2023 and encouraged the use of natural resources in ecologically sustainable and human ways. This helped the donkey dependent communities and ensured its contribution to sustainable economic growth.

As a way forward, the preparation of the second Pan African Conference was scheduled for March 2025 with the support of RECs and other strategic supporters. He hoped that the implementation changes would include coordinated efforts, monitoring, research and enforcement. He mentioned that the long-term vision looked to collaboration and feasible actions.



Dr. Hiver Boussini, Senior Animal Health Officer, AU-IBAR

CASE STUDY OF WORKING DONKEY WELFARE IN THE MWEA RICE BELT IN KENYA



Ms Jane Njuguna, Livestock Production Officer, Kirinyaga County Government

Ms. Jane Njuguna deliberated on the welfare issues affecting working donkeys in the Mwea Rice Belt. She informed delegates that the major issues faced included scavenging leading to malnutrition, wounds due to harnessing and whipping, road traffic accidents and malicious cuts to make the donkey unusable. She emphasized that the main issue was mass slaughter to source the donkey skins for sale.

She also deliberated on the problems that the veterinarians experience including a lack of adequate information and limited access to drugs locally. To solve this, Ms. Njuguna suggested that compassion for donkeys was key and that there was need for collaboration with non-governmental organizations and other organizations who pursue the same cause. She was certain that if well taken care of, donkeys could be used to earn a living.

CASE STUDY OF SPANA AND TAWESO PARTNERSHIP FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN NORTHERN TANZANIA

Mr Martin Kahema informed delegates that TAWESO stood in to help the animals following the landslide that took place in Munyara, Tanzania. He mentioned that this was a contrary measure compared to other responders who attended to human survivors.

Mr Kahema informed the delegates that they rescued and rehabilitated 607 animals with the help of the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries. 8,845 animals received veterinary care, emergency feeding to 5,060 animals. He reported that TAWESO had an opportunity to speak to media and create awareness through ITV which is a major news channel in Tanzania.



Mr. Martin Kahema, Central Zone Manager, Tanzania Animal Welfare Society (TAWESO), Tanzania

He went on to give recommendations on measures to mitigate disasters that would occur in future. Mr Kahema stated that collaboration with other organizations was critical. He cited that saving animals was important to sustain human livelihoods. More proactive efforts in saving animals in times of crisis were needed.

POSITIVE CITIES PLEDGE

Mr. Gerrard began by informing the delegates about the Positive Cities Pledge which he described as crucial. The Positive Cities Pledge is an initiative that highlights eight (8) interconnected commitments centered on positive harmonious relationships between human beings and animals in urban areas. He informed delegates that the commitments included public health, quality of life, economic development, animal welfare, community engagement, evidenced-based approaches, collaboration and resource allocation and clear governance.



Mr. Patrick Gerrard, Director Advocacy, International Companion Animal Management Coalition (ICAM)

He emphasized that it was vital that the commitments be implemented through coordinated partnerships and collaboration. Further, the pledge was key as it builds momentum, provides social proof, creates positive noise and influences policy.

Mr Gerrard mentioned that the root causes of overpopulation and a lack of proper vaccination in animals included weak animal welfare laws, unregulated commercial breeding, reactionary stray control, insufficient veterinary access and capacity, inadequate infrastructure and limited education and awareness.

He encouraged delegates to learn more about the Positive Cities Pledge and invited cities and towns to join the initiative. Mr Gerrard concluded by inviting delegates to the 12th Bi-annual World Urban Forum which would be happening in Cairo, Egypt from 4-8th November 2024.





**SESSION 3: UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)**

Session Moderator

Mr Otieno opened the session by giving an overview of the UNEP session explaining that the session on UNEP, known as UNEP Day, was key as it focused on UNEP's work with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for most of the day.

He recalled that in 2017, the Civil Society Unit (CSU) had a meeting with civil society organizations in Kenya at the Gigiri office. It was noted then that not many civil society organizations had known about UNEP's engagement with the civil society despite UNEP being one of the UN agencies that is headquartered in the global south.

It was then that the CSU team decided that more should be done to sensitize civil society organizations in Africa about the work of UNEP and how the civil society organizations could engage with UNEP. This led to the partnership between UNEP and ANAW and that was when the conference took off. The first two conferences were held at UNEP.

He highlighted that the UNEP Office had two units: The Governing Bodies Unit which constituted the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) and the Civil Society Unit (CSU) which constituted observers who were majorly Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS).

He invited the first speaker to begin the session.

IMPORTANCE OF MAJOR GROUPS ENGAGEMENT WITH UNEP AND UNEA PROCESSES



Mr. Isaiah Otieno - Associate Programme Management Officer UNEP



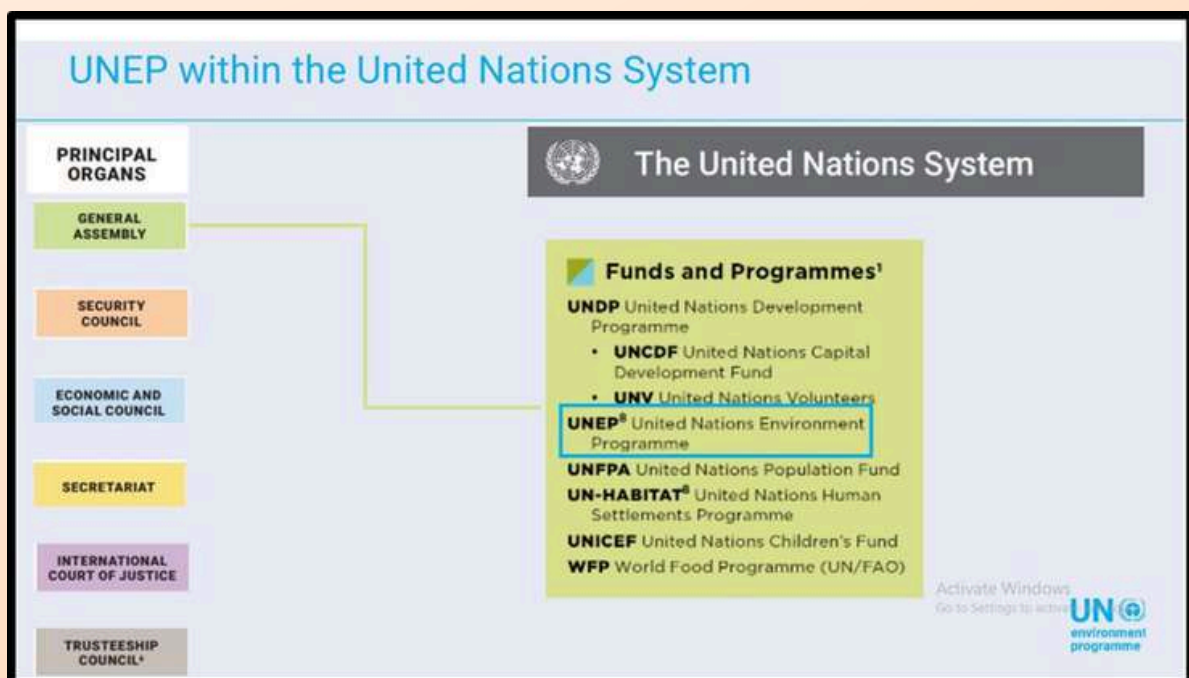
Ms. Radhika Ochalik, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Ms. Radhika Ochalik began by introducing herself to the delegates and explained her work as the Director of the Governance Affairs office. She stated that the major role of the office was to prepare and organize for meetings of the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA) and the Committee of the Permanent Representatives (CPR), in supporting Member States. The office also dealt with stakeholder engagement and supported the civil society through the nine (9) Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) in their engagement in UNEA and the CPRs. She expressed that she was pleased to attend the conference and was grateful for the opportunity to engage with the delegates. She hoped that delegates would learn more during the sessions and encouraged organizations to apply for accreditation to UNEP, if they saw fit.

Her presentation focused on UNEP’s history, mandate, its role in the UN system and its structure. She embarked on historical perspectives by explaining that in 1972, UNEP was established in Nairobi - the first UN office located in the global south - following the Stockholm Conference which led to a decision by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to monitor the state of the environment, to inform policy making with science and to coordinate responses to the world’s environmental challenges. In 2012, at the RIO+20, Member States adopted a landmark document called, The Future We Want. UNEP’s mandate was strengthened and the governance of UNEP, and UNEP’s contribution was acknowledged through UNEP@50 in 2022.

She expounded that UNEP’s role was to be the leader in global environmental matters, that set the global environmental agenda, promoted the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the UN system and served as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. Its mission was to provide leadership and encourage partnerships in caring for the environment by informing, enabling and inspiring nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of the future generations.

Ms. Ochalik indicated that UNEP’s mission in practice was to inform through science- policy which identified emerging environmental threats, to enable through convening power to tackle triple planetary crisis, environmental governance, capacity building and partnerships, and to inspire by showing that positive change was possible. It would serve as the “environmental conscience of the world”. The presenter proceeded on to foster insight on UNEP’s role in the wider UN system.



She informed the delegates about UNEP's structure and governance. She cited that UNEP had regional presence through the 6 Regional Offices that represented the Executive Director in the regions. The six offices are in Africa based in Kenya; Asia- Pacific based in Bangkok; Europe in Geneva; Latin American and the Caribbean in Panama; West Asia in Lebanon and North American in Washington DC. The regional offices also had sub-regional offices.

It was expected that UNEP would be piloting country presence in about 18 countries through the ONE UN approach so that the UNEP staff would be placed at the UN Country Team level. UNEP's programme delivery was led by five (5) thematic divisions. Communications, Policy and Programme and Corporate Services Divisions that cut across all divisions. To enhance UNEP's work in key areas including in the delivery of the Medium-Term Strategy (MTS), UNEP also had a Chief Scientist, and Chief Digital Officer.

Ms. Ochalik informed the delegates that UNEP had an office in New York to work with Member States in the intergovernmental processes such as the UNGA and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The Governance Affairs Office served as Secretariat to the Governing Bodies and led the engagement with civil society actors. UNEP also had an independent Evaluation Office that reported to the Executive Director but exercised independent oversight of the programme. The latest addition is the secretariat for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) on Plastic Pollution. UNEA 5.2 mandated that an INC be established to negotiate a treaty on plastic pollution including on marine environment. The secretariat of the committee was based in Nairobi.

The presenter then deliberated on Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) at UNEP. She stated that the development of environmental law involved negotiations on treaties on environmental issues. The MEAs or treaties on environmental issues were a very important element of establishing and delivering on international commitments for the environment. UNEP hosted and administered the secretariat of 15 MEAs that covered a wide range of regional and global environmental issues.

She cited that UNEP hosted convention secretariats that cover a wide range of regional and global issues. She gave an example of the secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) which was administered by UNEP and was based in Montreal. She also cited the secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury which was administered by UNEP but was based in Geneva. There were three entities with independent secretariats under the division of Early Warning and Assessment namely the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) based in Geneva, The Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) in Bonn, and the UN Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation in Geneva.

Ms Ochalik mentioned that there was a mandate that came out of UNEA 5.2 that Member States were to negotiate the modalities for a panel on chemicals and waste. It was ongoing and was hoped that the negotiations on establishing the panel would conclude by 2025.

She invited a colleague to play a [short video on the 50th anniversary of UNEP.](#)

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

Please explain how the Regional Seas Agreement fits in with UNEP, specifically the Caribbean Environment Programme.

The Regional Seas Programme is administered by UNEP, and they fall under the Ecosystems Division where staff is allocated to the Regional Seas Convention. The programme coordinates the work with the conventions. The programme is part of the MEAs that are administered by UNEP. They have their own governance systems and parties deciding the priorities and the programme of work. It is critical to distinguish between UNEA and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). UNEA governs UNEP and Member States in terms of global environmental priorities while MEAs focus on specific areas and issues, which have their own governance systems but are administered by UNEP (UNEP provides its secretariat).

The 6th Session of UNEA was special for the MEAs. For the first time, UNEA had an item, Cooperation with Multilateral Environmental Agreements on the agenda. UNEP provided a platform where the MEAs including the Regional Seas MEAs were able to participate in UNEA. A special day was dedicated for discussion on the MEAs with the presidents of the Conference of Parties.

Some of the COPs participated with the panels and the executive secretaries were present in some of the dialogues. An exhibition space was given to showcase the work of the MEAs and many side events were held on topics tackled by the MEAs that were related to the theme. For UNEA 7 that would take place in December 2025, UNEP would work with the UNEA Bureau to review and consider the item, Cooperation with Multilateral Environmental Agreements, with the participation of MEAs.



THE OUTCOMES OF UNEA-6, PREPARATIONS TOWARDS UNEA-7 AND THE ROLE OF MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS



Mr. Ulf Bjornholm, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Mr Bjornholm who served as the Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies to UNEP, the Head of Governing Bodies Unit in the Governing Affairs Office and the Head of the Civil Society Unit (CSU) on an interim basis at UNEP, took the stage.

His presentation aimed to give insights on how to become involved in UNEP's work, the Governing Bodies and the United Nations (UN) on environmental issues to both organizations that were accredited to UNEP and those that were not, and what that could mean to them, to UNEP and to the Member States.

He began by stating that UNEP was committed to partnering with civil society actors to facilitate engagement and support transparency and inclusiveness in the intergovernmental decision-making processes at UNEP.

Supported by UNEP's Civil Society Unit (CSU) in the Governance Affairs Office, UNEP was mandated to collaborate with NGOs, non-for-profit civil society organizations and networks through the "Major Group and Stakeholder" approach, to ensure effective, broad and balanced participation and representation at UNEP-organized meetings.

He informed the delegates that organizations accredited to UNEP were essential partners to the organization's mission and mandate as they contributed to the formulation and implementation of UNEA decisions and resolutions, including UNEP's Programme of Work and Medium-Term Strategy as approved by UNEA. He noted the interaction between UNEP and the civil society had grown significantly in the past decade with over 1,200 organizations achieving formal consultative status through UNEP accreditation.

Mr Bjornholm traced the origin of civil society engagement through Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) back to 1992. It was then that the concept of the MGS was established at the Rio Conference on Environment and Development as was enshrined in the outcome document "Agenda 21". He enumerated the nine (9) MGS to include farmers, women, scientific and technological community, children and the youth, indigenous peoples and their communities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and local authorities.

He embarked on examining the roles MGS play during UNEA. He mentioned that they contributed to the consultations on identifying a UNEA theme, contributed to the tabling and negotiation on UNEA resolutions and undertook the available opportunities to influence the decision-making processes. The opportunities that could be pursued included participating at any official CPR or UNEA meetings, and influencing in many ways by making the CSO voice heard in ways such as making statements, organize side events, providing written comments, and sharing their views on an on-going negotiation. MGS also often engaged in informal lobbying and work closely with Member States supporting their agenda.

Accredited organizations were granted observer role status at UNEA and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) where they could give oral and written statements and have access to the CPR Portal which contained unedited working documents, drafts of resolutions, and other vital resources.

The presenter informed the delegates on key events where Major Groups and Stakeholders participate actively. He mentioned the pre-UNEA forums which include:

- **Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF):** A key preparatory meeting that happens before UNEA. Sessions of the forum provide a platform for Major Groups to coordinate, align positions, and discuss key environmental priorities
- **The Youth Environmental Assembly (YEA):** which runs parallel to the GMGSF. YEA is a platform for youth representatives to engage, share their perspectives, and align their contributions to the UNEA agenda.

He also informed delegates about the vital Regional Consultative Meetings (RCMs) which are organized on the side-lines of the Regional Ministerial Forums. The meetings allow stakeholders to engage in regional dialogues, offering an opportunity to discuss local and regional priorities. He cited key elements that run concurrently with major UNEP events commonly identified as Side Events. Here, MGS can propose or participate in the events held during UNEA, which focus on a variety of environmental topics and provide an informal space for discussions outside the formal agenda. They offer alternative spaces for deeper discussions on pressing environmental issues.

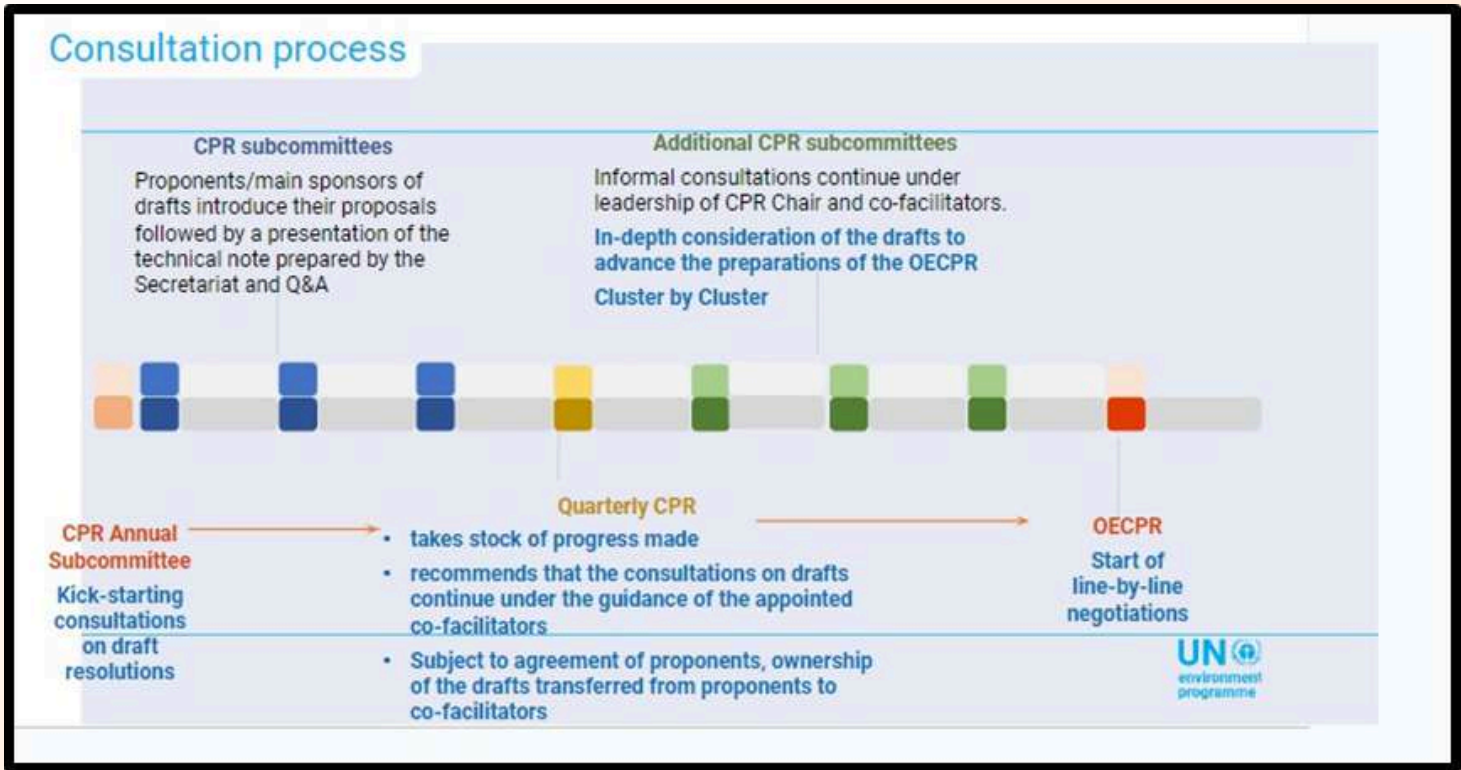
A key feature during UNEA is the “Green Room”. It is a physical and virtual platform belonging entirely to MGS themselves to exchange, host events and discussions in parallel to UNEA. It serves as an informal space designed to amplify voices from civil society, foster collaboration, and bring forward innovative ideas and solutions.

Mr Bjornholm explained how accredited MGS can participate during the consultation process for resolutions. He stated that at the discretion of the Chair and the co-facilitators and subject to agreement by Member States, the MGS can attend and listen to the proceedings, can make a general statement at the end of the consideration, when Member States have exhausted their intervention, and can ask for general comments on the drafts to be posted on the UNEA-6 Resolution portal. They, unfortunately, cannot make concrete textual proposals from the floor. He advised that MGS can be encouraged to make textual proposals through a Member State.

He stated that consultations and negotiations of the resolutions take place before and during the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR). Proponents or Co-facilitators presents the latest draft resolution to the Committee for further consideration before OECPR. During the OECPR, if consensus is reached, the draft is transmitted to UNEA for adoption and if consensus is not reached, UNEA may establish a new negotiation committee (Committee of the Whole) to finalize negotiations

Concerning the UNEA resolution process, all drafts of the resolutions may be accessed on the UNEP resolution portal. He confirmed that accredited Major Groups and Stakeholders have access to the Resolution Portal. The resolutions are normally classified into clusters relating to relevant topics. Co-facilitators are identified per each of the UNEP region to lead consultations.

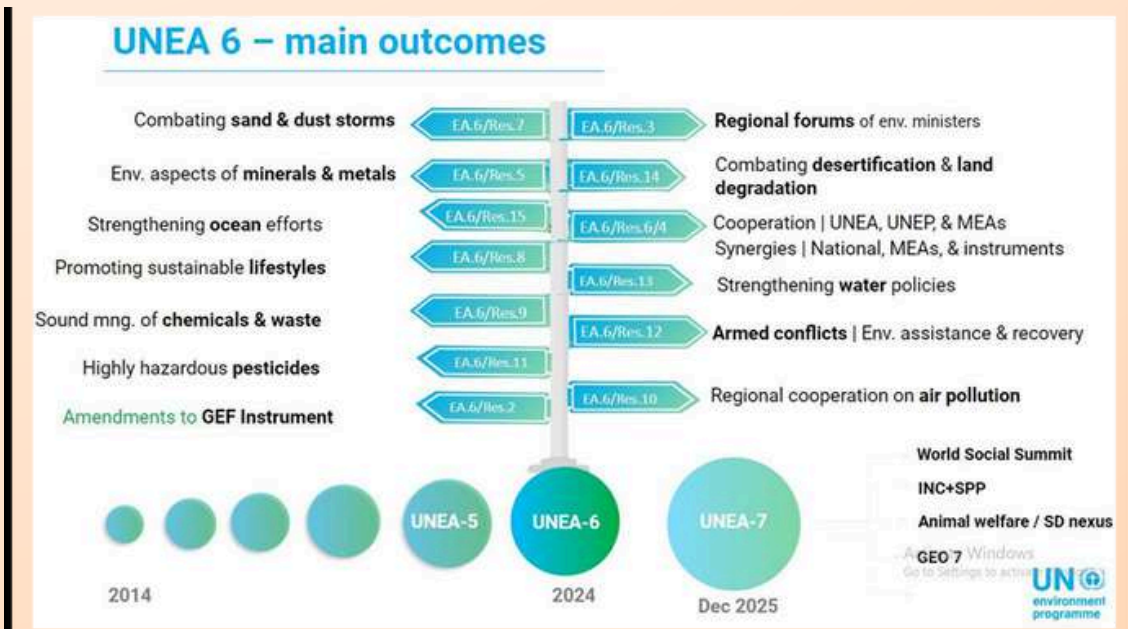
Mr Bjornholm outlined the resolution consultation process as follows:



(Source: UNEP, 2024)

He stated that during UNEA, Co-facilitators leading negotiations are encouraged to organize early consultations with MGS, and that MGS nominate “MGS resolution focal points”, to present common views on the drafts. A list of focal points from MGS for each UNEA-6 resolution or decision is made available on the UNEA-6 Resolution portal.

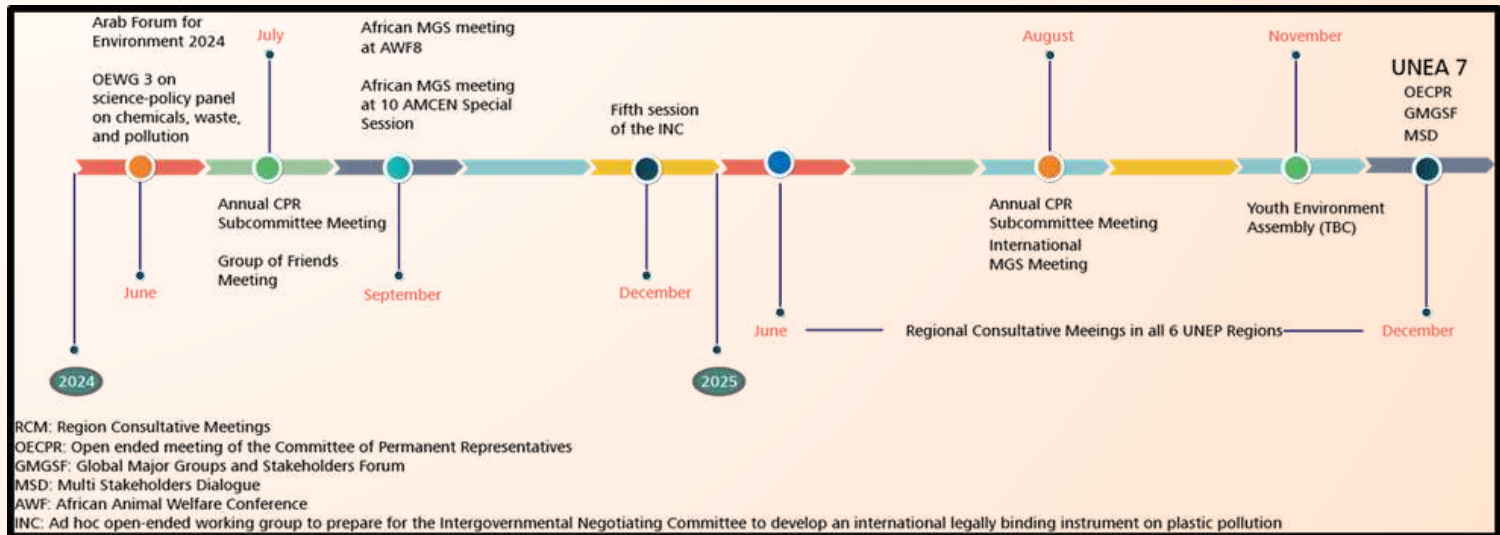
Mr Bjornholm highlighted the outcomes of UNEA 6 as follows:



(Source: UNEP, 2024)

He confirmed the decision that the seventh session will be held in Nairobi from December 8 to 12, 2025. The bureau of UNEA, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), was requested to define a theme for the seventh session of the Environment Assembly no later than twelve months in advance of the seventh session.

Mr Bjornholm encouraged the civil society organizations at the conference to get engaged. He mentioned that they could get involved in the work of UNEP and UNEA by applying for accreditation which allows them to follow and contribute to the work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, get engaged in the consultations on the theme for UNEA-7 and link up with other Major Groups and Stakeholders in their region.



(Source: UNEP, 2024)



QUESTION AND ANSWERS

Since 1971 to date, climate change has continued to be adverse, and millions of dollars are being spent on UNEP initiatives. Should the approach employed be revised instead of taking the resolutions approach?

Mr Bjornholm responded to the question, informing the delegate that the question is not for the secretariat to respond, and it should be addressed to the Member States, who decide on what the priorities should be.

He stated that, however, on a personal note, this could be examined from a perspective on whether the glass is half full or half empty. There has been a lot of progress, and the UN has played a major role. The video played earlier demonstrated some of these examples. The website shows the achievements made by UNEP over the years, with guidance from the Member States. UNEP has put in place numerous specific legal instruments and policy development. He gave an example highlighting that water and air is cleaner in many parts of the world than it was 50 years ago. Other parts still experience these challenges. It is up to the Member States to consider, decide and agree on key priorities when it comes to UN reforms. It is a great challenge for Member States to agree on these by consensus.

He maintained that the world is a better place with UN in it even though it may not be as efficient as would be expected. On environment, the international community is not doing enough and most of the Member States would agree due to various reasons. He urged delegates not to give up. They should not be complacent. There are many achievements to be celebrated. Stakeholders have a great role in this.

Mr Bjornholm addressed the question on what has not been implemented. He agreed that many agreements are in place but have not been implemented fully. He asserted that this was part of the reason why human beings were facing these environmental challenges. The stakeholders have a critical role as the watchdog in pointing out to Member States and to UN organizations where the gaps exist. Stakeholders could contribute to the implementation of the agreements on the ground. They also have a role in influencing the future decisions needed to go further when it comes to environmental sustainability.



UNEP has been implementing resolutions since UNEA 1 to UNEA 6, and now heading to UNEA 7. Is the organization keeping track of all the resolutions that were agreed to by Member States during the past assemblies? Is it possible for delegates to know which resolutions have not been implemented? What are UNEP's strategies towards implementing the resolutions and decisions by Member States?

Mr Bjornholm confirmed that UNEP do keep track of the implementation of the resolutions. He cited that it is done in two ways:

- A registry on all resolutions and decisions taken by the governing council of UNEA, the predecessor of UNEA, since 1972 are easily accessible on the website. The resolutions are also retrievable through searching specific words.
- A specific portal for UNEA resolutions. It is an open portal accessible through the UNEP website where one can find each and every resolution and its level of implementation. Detailed information on the resolutions is provided.



(Source: UNEP, 2024)

He reminded the delegates to keep in mind that resolutions are not only for UNEP to implement. There has been a misconception that the responsibility of the implementation of the resolution falls squarely on UNEP. It so often happens that UNEP does not have the mandate or the resources to implement the resolutions. This is a joint initiative as the Member States, the civil society, UNEP and the general UN system have roles in its implementations.

UNEP has its Program of Work adopted by Member States. The Program of Work has a budget attached to it that is also adopted. It is currently at USD\$ 100 M per year. The challenge is that they do not receive the funds. They receive 80% or 90% of that but it means that they are not fully financed, particularly for UNEP's Program of Work. This is because more than half of Member States do not contribute as they should to the Environment Fund which is approved by Member States. It is difficult to fully implement the resolutions without the funds.

A challenge is posed as many of the adopted resolutions go over and above the Program of Work and many of them are not financed in part or fully. Funding gaps such as these are a general problem for many priorities globally, regionally and nationally where there are action plans which are not fully funded.

Mr Otieno added that the civil society has power. They could engage with their Member States to follow up on funding the UNEP Program of Work.

How does an organization get accredited? What are the criteria?

A full presentation on accreditation would be given in detail. But generally, to become accredited an organization should be

- Non-Governmental
- Non-Profit
- The work should be in the field of sustainable development
- The organization should have an international scope

How do we solve climate change?

UNEP and UNEA are not involved in the formulation of the international response to climate change. The formulation is done in a specific forum - the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It is based on scientific input from a specific scientific panel – the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which is administered by UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization. The convention is run directly under the UN General Assembly, and it is the forum where the decisions are made. UNEA and UNEP come in during implementation. UNEA can take in decisions to support the implementation of the priorities, targets and objectives that have been agreed under the convention. UNEP is helping Member States to implement the National Determined Contributions (NDCs), adaptation etc. under the convention.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAJOR GROUPS TO ENGAGE AT UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP) AND UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSEMBLY (UNEA)



Mr. David Ombisi, Programme Management Officer, Civil Society Unit, Governance Affairs Office, UNEP

Mr. David Ombisi took the stage and explained the opportunities that exist for Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) to engage at UNEP and UNEA events. He stated that UNEP recognized the importance of engaging MGS as partners and appreciated the perspectives they brought to the table, valuable research and advocacy functions they performed and their role in helping foster long-term, broad-based support for UNEP's mission.

Civil Society and stakeholder expertise enriched decision-making processes without questioning the intergovernmental nature of UNEP. This also added transparency and legitimacy to the work of UNEP and gives an opportunity for those who might be affected by decisions to raise their concerns but also make constructive suggestions.

He introduced the topic by stating that accreditation was not a requirement for participation in the implementation of projects, programmes or partnerships with UNEP. However, accreditation was required to participate in UNEP's policy-making processes as observers and contributors.

He emphasized that it was critical for civil society to seek accreditation as formal accreditation is the entry point for engaging with UNEP and UNEA processes. It allowed organizations to participate in meetings, submit written input, and make oral interventions. He informed the participants that organizations could apply for accreditation under one of the nine (9) Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS).

Accredited MGS could provide their expertise and input across three (3) levels of engagement at UNEP:

- Agenda setting where MGS could provide inputs to the agendas with their inputs/reports and concrete suggestions such as towards the UNEA-7 theme.
- MGS benefitted from UNEPs transparent communication following the access- to-information policies and guidance and therefore could engage at decision making.
- MGS could also be engaged at implementation level through strategic partnerships towards project and programme implementation work.

The civil society representatives could attend Regional Consultative Meetings (RCM), the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF), UNEA-7, Meetings of the Committee of the Permanent Representatives (CPR), and meetings such as the INC and the OEWG on SPP.

The CSU also reached out to MGS when UNEP was seeking their voices and input on specific issues. Mr Ombisi stated that this was done in the form of oral or written statements. The statements should be concise, precise and tailored to the audience and setting, avoid repetition of previous points, but rather seek to add to the discussions, strive to create cohesion amongst MGS - statements carry more weight when endorsed by a larger group of stakeholders - and recognize MGS champions amongst Member States.

He cited that it was important to engage with your Major Groups and Stakeholders and regions. One could do so by finding out who the respective Major Group Facilitator(s) and Regional Facilitator(s) were and getting in touch with them. These are members elected to represent their specific Major Groups and Regions, and they form a committee known as the Major Groups Facilitating Committee (MGFC). MGS were encouraged to participate in the elections - nominate, get nominated and vote - and to engage fully in their MGS activities.

He stated that MGS had the opportunity to network with other organizations and bilateral meetings with Member States and senior UN staff. He also mentioned that Major Groups and stakeholders played an active role in implementation, often through joint projects on issues such as environmental protection, climate change mitigation, and community-based sustainability initiatives with UNEP or member states after the resolution is adopted.

He emphasized that civil society engagement was key as it enriched decision making processes with expertise, local knowledge, and innovative ideas, they provided voices of affected communities, and collaborative governance. He encouraged MGS to engage actively and make valuable contributions, advocate for policies, and shape the global environmental agenda, to stay informed, participate in upcoming meetings and events, and leverage these opportunities to push for meaningful change in environmental governance.

UNEP ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Ms Melissa Ngilandala began by describing the term ‘accreditation’ as an observer status granted to civil society organizations that are active in the field of the environment. It provides a chance for Non-Governmental Organizations to bring experiences, solutions, and important issues faced by the people to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) Member States, influence policy making process and work with the Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) in bringing the voices of civil society to policymakers.



Ms. Melissa Ngilandala, Civil Society Engagement Assistant, UNEP

She outlined the criteria for becoming a UNEP accredited organization. She cited that the organization must be a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization, with an international scope of work, be a legal entity in at least one country, have a major focus in the field of environment and/or sustainable development and be in existence for at least two years at the time of the application.

To apply for accreditation, an organization must submit an application through this link: <https://accreditation.unep.org/Register>. One must create an account, and submit the following documents:

- A cover letter with the organization’s letter head and signature
- A certified copy of constitution/charter and/or statutes/by-laws
- An official registration document showing non-governmental status
- Proof of non-profit status – tax exemption certificate or a certificate of non-profit making
- Proof of engagement in the field of environment
- An account of the international scope of your activities

In combining the last two criteria, she explained that’s the interested applicants must write down at least three (3) national activities that your organization has carried out in your country, and at least three (3) international activities that the organization has carried out internationally. She stated that the applicants must include relevant proof that shows that the activities did indeed take place. This could be in form of annual reports, videos, pictures, or media interviews.

Once submitted, the documents undergo an initial review. Any additional documents needed would be requested at this point. If a response is not received in a week, the file would be closed. They team would invite them to re-apply for accreditation. If response is received, the application proceeds to a second detailed review. Once done, research on the applicant’s organization is done on the environmental activities cited – when, where and how they took place.

If the research findings are satisfactory, the application moves to the first stage of approval. After the first approval, it moves to the final stage of approval. Once this stage is achieved, the applicant’s organization would be officially accredited. They would reach out through email, attaching an accreditation letter with necessary information that the applicant would need to be aware of as an accredited organization.

She informed interested delegates that all information was available at the website <https://www.unenvironment.org/civil-society-engagement/accreditation>. All incoming accreditation requests can be sent to unep-accreditation@un.org

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

What is the relationship between registering with UNEP and attending the General Assembly meetings. Is it a separate registration system?

Mr Otieno explained that there was a difference between accreditation and registration. Registration happens when a representative of an organization would want to attend a specific meeting. He explained that one may not need accreditation to attend some meetings. Accreditation is a process between UNEP and the organization and it is not individual. For some meetings, one would need accreditation to register such as the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA).

He explained that the General Assembly has an accreditation process for civil society organizations that engage with them and it is separate from that of UNEP. However, if an organization is accredited to the General Assembly and it is mentioned to UNEP during the accreditation process, the process would be fast tracked because it is trusted that the background checks have been done and is merely a straightforward procedure for UNEP. The same applies when the organization is accredited to UNEP and would like to apply for the ECOSOC consultative status.

Mr Ombisi stated that different UN organizations and processes have different accreditation requirements. Accreditation to UNEP does not qualify an organization to be accredited to for instance, UNFCCC or UNCCD. To be accredited to these conferences, one would need to still fulfil its requirements. The same applies to the General Assembly. The accreditation being presented refers to UNEP and UNEA processes.

If one wanted to attend a meeting before or during UNEA and was not accredited, how would one get an invitation to attend the meetings?

Mr Otieno explained that the only disadvantage that non-accredited organizations have, is that they do not get information from UNEP directly. He highlighted that once an organization is accredited, they are added to the UNEP mailing list. Any information on any meeting is received on the email addresses that were provided. Non-accredited organizations do not have this advantage. This meant that they have to gain information through the networks.

Non-accredited organizations can be informed of when UNEP-related meetings take place in the following ways:

1. A WhatsApp group for civil society Major Groups and Stakeholders for Africa. The group is open to both accredited and non-accredited organizations. A variety of discussions take place in the group on UNEP-related events.
2. Any meeting that is UNEP-related is usually posted on the UNEP civil society website. It is indicated whether the meeting is only accredited organizations or is open to everyone. The registration links are provided on the website as well.

Mr Ombisi informed the delegates that accredited organizations have additional advantages in terms of receiving the background materials beforehand, the portal, and being able to contribute before the actual meetings. Accredited organizations are able to access specific meetings that non-accredited organizations cannot. UNEP encouraged more organizations to become accredited. Accreditation comes at no financial cost in the application process.

Can UNEP support civil society organizations who campaign against oil exploitation in areas where indigenous people inhabit?

Mr Ombisi indicated that there was no formal platform to where the issues are brought to the attention of UNEP. UNEP can reach out to the concerned governments through their representatives in Nairobi or through their ministries of environment to request them to take into consideration the concerns that may have been raised by the local communities and the indigenous people within the locality. UNEP does not have the mandate to address the issues, but it can act as a mediating platform.

Mr Otieno added that the delegates can meet the UNEP staff who is the focal point for indigenous people, and she can guide them to carry out a formal request to UNEP. He notified the delegates that the process would take time.

One of the major criteria for accreditation is that the organization must be in existence for at least two years at the time of the application. What happens to the fresh start ups with new projects and fresh ideas by young people who haven't achieved the two-year timeline?

Ms Ngilandala mentioned that unfortunately they could not accredit organizations that have less than two years of relevant work done. She advised that they should wait until they attain the two-year timeline before seeking accreditation.

Mr Otieno added that the process is rigorous and consumes a lot of time. It involves UNEP staff in numerous offices and if an organization does not succeed within months, it would be a waste of needed human resource time. In achieving the two-year mark, this would demonstrate the organization's resilience and that it would be there to stay.

Is there a provision for financial support or structure for upcoming organizations to undertake international obligations?

Mr Ombisi mentioned that, unfortunately, UNEP was not a funding organization and may not be able to fund the organizations unless it is a project that is jointly implemented. Some funding may be available through resource mobilization.

In pursuing international ventures, it did not mean that they had to implement a project on the ground. International activities may include participating in a regional or an international conference that would be taking place locally. The organization may organize a side event during the conference or be a panelist at the conference. That counts as an international activity as it involves sharing knowledge and best practices beyond their country.

Why is it emphasized that it must be a non-profit making organization?

It was mentioned that if the focus or priority of an organization is to make profit, the interest towards protecting the environment would be compromised.

Young people in school and at the university cannot run an organization or company yet, but they are interested and passionate about the environment. How are they incorporated in the events? Do they have seats in the events for young people to take part in?

Mr Otieno mentioned that one of the nine major groups and stakeholders is the Children and Youth Major Group. Civil society organizations are categorized into these groups. There are organizations that have been registered in their countries and are run by children and youth. The organizations get accredited to UNEP. They have been noted to be one of the most vibrant major groups so far. Before every UNEA, the group organizes the Youth Assembly where they bring together 500 participants from across the globe to Nairobi. It is a wonderful opportunity for children as well as they are able to attend the assembly and make statements.

Mr Ombisi stated that if as an individual that does not have an organization, they can seek to be 'adopted' by an existing children and youth organization which would then be an avenue for them to participate in the different UNEP-related meetings and processes that are taking place. They were encouraged to network with existing organizations.

Other opportunities were offered at the conference:

- It was suggested that one can approach an organization that may be based in a different country, and they do not have anyone in Kenya to attend the CPR and report on what is happening. One may achieve exposure and may be able to gain the information needed.
- Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW) offered to invite interested individuals to join its network where they can participate in the events. There are individuals and organizations that are part of the membership across Africa.
- It was highlighted that there were representatives from Children and Youth at the conference. The delegate was encouraged to reach out to gain more information on how to participate.

What about the instance where the organization is able to make profit and would like to use the profit to support the efforts towards conserving the environment? Isn't that a positive move?

UNEP has a section that deals with partnerships and a unit that deals with the private sector. There are guidelines on how they engage with the private sector – companies and businesses involved in making profits and also have departments on sustainability policies.

Does UNEA keep a database of accredited organizations and is this information in the public domain?

A database of all accredited organizations is uploaded to the UNEP civil society website and are added to the INDICO registration system that UNEP uses for registration to its meetings. The information is publicly available.

In all these, what are the mechanisms that help eliminate corruption and interested parties who may attempt to influence policy for financial gain and other environmental benefits?

The Civil Society Unit encourages self-organization of the MGS by the Major Groups Facilitating Committee. They are able to make decisions independently, for instance nominating their spokesperson or nominating attendees to a conference.

Mr Ombisi mentioned that the accreditation is not permanent. UNEP has an obligation to revoke an organization if it stopped existing, goes against the true path that had them accredited or if the organization gets involved in criminal activities. UNEP encourages accredited organizations to keep sharing their annual reports, which gives them an idea of what activities have been undertaken.

For local NGOs who are part of international NGOs is it preferable to ask for accreditation in the name of the local NGOs or the international NGO?

If the local NGO meets the criteria, the international and the local can seek to get accreditation separately. This is key as some of the processes within the Major Groups system are localized and/or regional, and international organizations would only be able to participate through their local office.

If an international body that is accredited forms a unit in another region, does the unit have to wait two years or can they fall under the umbrella of the mother organization but in a new region?

The registration is considered at the local level. For instance, if it is registered in Kenya, it will be counted from the day of registration indicated by the NGO Council of Kenya. It will be treated as a new organization or entity.





**SESSION 4A: WORKING GROUP ON AFRICA
ANIMAL WELFARE CONFERENCE
EVALUATION REPORT**

**Mr. Isaiah Otieno, Associate
Programme Management Officer,
UNEP**



WORKING GROUP ON AFRICA ANIMAL WELFARE CONFERENCE EVALUATION REPORT



Dr David Obiero, Lecturer, Maasai Mara University

Dr David Obiero shared reflections and recommendations from a working group on the AAWC evaluation report. He began by acknowledging his colleagues and faculty members from Egerton University, Dr. Kirui and Dr. Were, who were elemental in coming up with the findings and discussing the results of the AAWC evaluation report.

He informed the delegates that what came out strongly was that the delegates appreciated the co-hosting - The UNEP, AU-IBAR, and ANAW - collaboration. The working group felt that it gave the conference sustainability because of the core mandates of the organizations, authenticity and the ability to customize the implementation of the discussed elements of the deliberations at the conferences.

Dr Obiero reported that the conference had been recognized as a significant contributor to policy influence, CSO programs, and for personal and professional development. It was evident that the conference should continue for these purposes.

It was deliberated that the frequency of the conferences should be revised. There were differing views with the delegates suggesting to have it either once a year, once every two years or within a shorter period of time.

He mentioned that there were suggestions to have the final day as a day for optional sightseeing. He stated that participants suggested that the conference should have an ice-breaker session in the evenings for interaction in a more relaxed setting such as a cocktail.

Dr Obiero cited that an observation came out that a process to identify countries for the conference venue should be in place. The conference had the necessary tools to direct it in its mandate. Using the vision and the mission of the conference and applying an agreed upon process, the team could identify the host country, staying true to why the conference was developed in the first place.

He highlighted that mechanisms were needed to operationalize the conference resolutions that go beyond the closure of the conference sessions.

It was also suggested that a separate seminar should be organized as a follow-up so that the team can bring out the recommendations and come up with an implementation matrix, decide the quick wins that can be implemented, so that they can determine the resolutions to be implemented before the next conference.

He concluded by stating that he looked to the secretariat to guide the team on organizing the seminar on the recommendations.





**SESSION 4B: ANIMAL WELFARE,
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND
DEVELOPMENT**





**Mr Dan Oduor, Founder and Director,
Stawisha Africa Initiative**

ANIMAL WELFARE IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION



Dr. Jean Claude Masengesho, CEO, Rwanda Animal Welfare Organization (RAWO)

In his presentation, Dr. Jean Claude Masengesho discussed a ground-breaking initiative to enhance animal welfare in Rwanda, which he led, that focused on raising awareness among livestock farmers between 2021 and 2023.

He reported that in collaboration with local and international stakeholders, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources and its implementing agency, the Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB). The initiative extended partnerships to the Rwanda Council of Veterinarians and international organizations, including WTS, the project donor, and Open Wing Alliance.

Dr Masengesho stated that the project officially launched under a cooperation agreement with WTS, starting with a pilot in Musanze District, located in northern Rwanda. This district was selected for its potential as a model for improving animal welfare at the farm level. RAWO and WTS co-developed training materials that were tailored to the needs of the local farming community. Capacity building began with internal team training to ensure mastery of these materials, followed by a stakeholder engagement workshop. He cited that the workshop brought together representatives from government agencies, livestock experts, environmental organizations, and universities. Even the District Mayor participated, underscoring the significance of this initiative.

With stakeholder alignment secured, the project received formal approval to operate across the district's 15 sectors. Dr. Masengesho and his team worked closely with local veterinary officers to identify 1,800 farmers as direct beneficiaries. These farmers, carefully chosen for their ability to disseminate knowledge within their communities, underwent pre-assessment tests to gauge their initial understanding of animal welfare.

Dr Masengesho stated that the project employed a dual approach to training, combining theoretical sessions held in community halls with practical, hands-on learning at local farms. Training topics covered the Five Freedoms of animal welfare, responsible livestock ownership, proper housing, nutrition using locally available resources, biosecurity measures, disease prevention, and the One Health approach. The latter emphasized the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health, with a focus on combating antimicrobial resistance.

Implementation involved three consecutive sessions in each sector, targeting 120 farmers per sector. Sessions lasted three hours and were split between theoretical discussions and practical applications. Farmers actively engaged in assessing and implementing welfare standards, guided by their newfound understanding of the responsibilities tied to livestock ownership.

According to Dr Masengesho, the post-training evaluations revealed remarkable improvements in farmers' knowledge and practices. The training indicated clear impact as a significant portion of participants who lacked awareness of basic animal welfare concepts before expressed interest in further training demonstrating substantial progress.

The project's outcomes extended beyond individual farmers. It strengthened partnerships with government institutions, leading to regular invitations for Dr. Masengesho and his team to participate in high-level agricultural and livestock discussions. The initiative also complemented the "One Cow per Poor Family" program, where beneficiaries used their newly acquired skills to improve the welfare and productivity of their animals. This synergy significantly enhanced the program's impact, contributing to better livelihoods for vulnerable families.

In 2024, the project shifted focus to advocate for integrating animal welfare standards into Rwanda's agricultural policies. Dr. Masengesho organized additional stakeholder workshops, engaging ministry officials, NGOs, and academic institutions to discuss adopting these standards. Educational outreach expanded to schools and universities, aiming to instill compassion and welfare principles in younger generations.

Social media platforms and local radio programs have become vital tools for advocacy, amplifying awareness and encouraging public participation.

Reflecting on the journey, Dr. Masengesho expressed deep gratitude to all collaborators and donors, whose support was instrumental in achieving these milestones. The initiative underscored the transformative power of collaboration, capacity building, and sustainable practices in advancing animal welfare in Rwanda.

Karin Siegmund commended Dr. Masengesho's leadership and the program's expansive growth over the years. She highlighted the program's ability to evolve in multiple directions, incorporating administrative partnerships to foster broader implementation across Rwanda.

Ms Siegmund emphasized the importance of learning from projects like this, which offer valuable case studies and best practices for integrating animal welfare into project designs. She encouraged other organizations to leverage the resources and experiences shared through the platform, underscoring collaboration as a critical success factor. By sharing expertise and fostering partnerships, these efforts could extend animal welfare principles to new regions and projects.

She also invited stakeholders to explore the Integrated Welfare platform, a resource hub designed to support organizations in incorporating animal welfare into development initiatives. Ms Siegmund's call to action aimed to inspire further collaboration and resource-sharing, ensuring that animal welfare becomes a foundational element in agricultural and development programs worldwide.

In closing, Ms Siegmund expressed her appreciation for the collective effort and commitment demonstrated by all involved. She thanked the organizing committee of the conference and reaffirmed her dedication to advancing animal welfare through collaborative and innovative approaches.



SHIFTING TRADE ROUTES OF LIVE ANIMALS EXPORT BY SEA



Dr. Bryce Marock, Veterinary Consultant, National Council of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal (NSPCA)

Dr Bryce Marock delivered a compelling presentation addressing the complexities and challenges of animal welfare in the context of live animal transport by sea. He began by outlining the unique position of the NSPCA as a constitutionally mandated organization, an attribute that sets it apart not only in Africa but globally. This mandate, upheld by South Africa's Constitutional Court, integrates the NSPCA's authority with the country's primary legislation for animal protection, ensuring its legal ability to enforce welfare standards and prosecute violations.

The NSPCA oversees 70 local SPCAs across South Africa, supported by a national body that operates specialized units. These units include the Farm Animal Protection Unit, Wildlife Protection Unit, and Special Projects Unit, among others, which handle issues ranging from training and compliance to addressing wildlife crimes and advocating for policy reform.

Dr. Marock highlighted recent successes, such as a landmark court victory that required welfare considerations to be factored into international trade agreements. This legal precedent underscores the organization's pivotal role in advancing animal welfare in South Africa and beyond.

Dr. Marock transitioned to discuss the broader topic of live animal transport by sea, a practice rife with welfare concerns and regulatory challenges. He provided a historical perspective on the NSPCA's involvement, describing its consistent presence in monitoring and advocating for better conditions on ships. Over the years, the NSPCA has sought to enforce basic standards, including ensuring adequate space for animals, providing continuous access to water, and maintaining humane handling practices during loading. Despite these efforts, he acknowledged that systemic issues persist, largely due to non-compliance by transporters and inadequate enforcement by regulatory bodies.

Global shifts in trade regulations have further complicated the situation. Dr. Marock provided examples from countries such as Australia, Brazil, Germany, and New Zealand, where measures like partial bans, complete prohibitions, or stricter regulations on live animal exports have been implemented. While these changes are positive from a welfare perspective, they have often led to unintended consequences. For instance, exporters seeking to evade these stricter regulations have redirected their operations to less regulated regions, including South Africa. This exploitation of regulatory loopholes has placed an additional burden on the NSPCA, which frequently encounters non-compliance with basic welfare standards.

Dr. Marock elaborated on the severe welfare risks inherent in sea transportation. Animals often endure extreme and sudden temperature changes, moving from cold climates to scorching heat or vice versa, without adequate preparation or acclimatization. Hygiene was another critical issue, with animals confined in cramped spaces where waste accumulates, leading to dangerous ammonia levels.

These conditions cause respiratory infections, eye irritation, and other health complications. Pregnant animals, often transported without proper scanning or documentation, face additional risks, with some giving birth during the journey under harrowing circumstances.

He shared a particularly troubling case involving a ship intercepted in Cape Town. Following a court order, NSPCA inspectors discovered deplorable conditions on board. Animals were found living among decomposing carcasses, suffering from infections, and many were too weak or injured to stand. The ammonia buildup in the enclosed environment exacerbated the animals' distress, and the situation was so dire that several animals had to be euthanized to prevent further suffering. This case, he noted, illustrates the systemic failures of both the shipping companies and regulatory frameworks to safeguard animal welfare during transport.

Dr. Marock also deliberated on the psychological and physiological stresses experienced by animals during transport. Prolonged confinement in noisy environments, with decibel levels comparable to standing near a passing train, exacerbates their suffering. Many animals experience heat stress, cold stress, and injuries caused by rough seas and poor handling. The lack of visibility and access for monitoring during voyages further complicates efforts to provide care or intervene in emergencies.

Looking ahead, Dr. Marock outlined efforts to address these challenges. The World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) is revising its terrestrial and maritime codes to enhance global standards for live animal transport. In South Africa, the NSPCA is collaborating with the Department of Agriculture to develop stricter regulations, including mandatory monitoring, pregnancy screening, and better handling protocols. However, he emphasized that these efforts face significant obstacles, including resistance from exporters and a lack of political will within governmental departments. Diplomatic pressures further complicated matters, as trade interests often take precedence over welfare concerns.

Dr. Marock concluded by calling for collective action to enforce higher standards, hold violators accountable and urged stakeholders to prioritize animal welfare in policy and practice.





SESSION 5 : DISASTERS AND ANIMAL WELFARE



Mr. John Forelli, Stress Management Consultant



EFFECTS OF FLOODS ON ANIMAL WELFARE IN EAST AFRICA



Dr. Thoma Kahema, Executive Director, Tanzania Animal Welfare Society

Dr. Thomas Kahema began his presentation by highlighting the effects of the floods that occurred earlier in the year in East Africa. He reported that the floods had caused widespread devastation, impacting over 2 million people across several countries, including Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The catastrophic flooding has resulted in 473 fatalities and displaced nearly 410,350 individuals, highlighting the severe humanitarian crisis facing the region.

Particularly, in Tanzania, Dr. Kahema followed up by stating the floods affected more than 200,000 people, leading to 155 deaths and impacting approximately 51,000 households. Uganda reported that 52,190 individuals were affected by the floods, with 23 fatalities and 241 injuries. In Burundi, over 239,780 people were impacted, with 36,900 displaced as a result of the flooding. Meanwhile, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 350,000 people faced challenges due to the floods, which also destroyed approximately 1.6 million hectares of cropland and grazing land.

Dr. Kahema argued that the floods had not only affected human populations but had also severely impacted wildlife and domestic animals. Wildlife had suffered from habitat destruction, drowning, and increased competition for dry land. Domestic animals faced numerous challenges, including separation from their owners, injury, lack of access to clean water and grazing land, and outbreaks of diseases such as rabies and leptospirosis. The displacement of wild animals has led to conflicts with domestic animals, as the latter sought refuge on dry ground, resulting in attacks.



Dr. Dennis Bahati, Program Manager, Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW)

In response to this crisis, Dr. Kahema provided recommendations including inspecting animal shelters, relocating animals to higher ground, and planning recovery efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of both wildlife and domestic animals during this challenging period. He urged communities to take proactive measures to protect animal welfare.

Dr. Dennis Bahati spoke on the work of Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW) in flood-affected regions of Kenya's Kajiado County, particularly with the Maa community in Shompole and Magadi, whose livelihoods rely on livestock.

With support from Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad (SPANNA), he reported that ANAW had taken critical steps to protect animals by providing veterinary care, assessed the community's climate change knowledge, and collaborated with the county government to develop a flood preparedness plan. ANAW also led awareness initiatives to educate communities on flood-related risks to animal welfare.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE/MANAGEMENT IN ANIMAL RESOURCE SECTOR IN AFRICA



Prof. James Wabacha, African Union-InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)

Prof. James Wabacha started his presentation by stating that the animal resource sector in Africa held significant economic and strategic importance, accounting for a third of the world's livestock population and serving as a vital livelihood for 70% of the rural poor. Despite this critical role, he argued that disaster preparedness concerning animal welfare was frequently overlooked. He referenced a study assessing the preparedness of African Union Member States (AU MS) which revealed considerable gaps in disaster management and risk reduction strategies related to animals.

Building on this, he stated that disasters such as droughts, floods, storms, and the associated epidemics, including zoonoses, presented substantial risks to economic stability, human and animal health. Key findings from the study indicated that many countries were inadequately equipped to handle such disasters. Specifically, there was a lack of coordination among relevant agencies, insufficient human and technical resources, and inadequate funding for veterinary services during times of crisis.

He further highlighted the absence of comprehensive legal frameworks to effectively manage animal relocations, evacuations, and compensation for losses incurred during disasters. Many countries also lacked essential early warning systems, animal-specific evacuation plans, and established disaster response protocols, including practices for species-specific slaughter and carcass disposal.

Dr. Wabacha brought to attention the urgent need for policy and legal reforms to integrate animal disaster management into national disaster response plans. Improving coordination at national, regional and continental levels, enhancing veterinary capacity, and securing dedicated funding are critical steps towards better disaster preparedness for animal welfare. Additionally, the enhancement of early warning mechanisms, risk communication strategies, and the establishment of strategic partnerships are essential to strengthen disaster response capabilities for animal resources across Africa.

Following the panel presentations, the floor opened to a series of thought-provoking questions and insightful remarks from the audience, sparking an engaging dialogue on various issues that enriched the discussion on animal welfare in Africa.

a) The need for improved emergency response structures in African Countries

The panel discussed the state of emergency response structures across African countries, noting a general lack of concrete plans. In Kenya, no substantial animal-focused emergency plans have been implemented, while Tanzania has a department for humanitarian response. However, discussions with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries highlight ongoing efforts to integrate animal welfare into Tanzania's emergency response framework.

b) Human Impact on the Environment and Climate Change

Human activities and inadequate climate policies were identified as gaps in addressing the environmental effects of disasters. While different countries had varying capacities for climate action, panelists stressed the importance of including veterinary perspectives in national climate strategies to ensure animals are considered. Although documents and policies to address climate change exist, panelists emphasized the need for better coordination between agencies addressing climate impacts and related disasters.

c) Wildlife Corridors and Disaster Mitigation

Delegates noted that wildlife corridors were proving effective in mitigating the effects of natural disasters and human encroachment, but their development remained slow compared to the rapid pace of infrastructure expansion. An increased focus on expanding corridors was needed to balance development with environmental preservation.

d) Working Animals and Resource Challenges

Panelists noted that working animals, essential to many rural livelihoods, often receive minimal attention in disaster planning. Organizations like ANAW are working to raise awareness and support for these animals, though resource constraints remain a challenge. This was evident during recent floods in Kenya's Mai Mahiu region as minimal aid was provided to displaced individuals.

e) Balancing Support for Human and Animal Welfare

When asked how to prioritize animal welfare alongside human needs, panelists stressed the importance of educating policymakers and the public on animals' critical role in sustaining livelihoods. Voices advocating for animal welfare must reach governments to ensure animals are factored into disaster response policies.

f) Organizations Supporting Animal Welfare in Disasters

Several organizations, including Africa Network for Animal Welfare, World Animal Protection, Brooke, Donkey Sanctuary, Social Protection for Animals Abroad, and World Health Organisation, are actively working to prioritize animal welfare in disaster contexts. The AU-IBAR's recent study serves as a call to action for such organizations, emphasizing that animals, including aquatic species, must not be overlooked during crises.

g) Legal Gaps and Policy Implementation

The panelists discussed instances where animals were prevented from being reunited with their owners, following disasters, highlighting a legal and policy gap. For instance, the National Disaster Operation Response Plan, in many African countries, scarcely mentioned animals, with minimal focus on wildlife and even less on domestic animals. To address this, laws should protect the right of displaced people to keep their animals. The panel urged the integration of animal considerations into national disaster plans, suggesting greater involvement from ministries like agriculture, to synthesize responses across various governmental bodies.

h) Gaps in Contingency Plans and Addressing Bioterrorism

Panelists acknowledged significant lags in African countries' contingency plans, especially in emerging threats like bioterrorism. While these threats remain speculative, there's need for proactive anticipation and preparation to mitigate disasters and pandemics such as COVID-19. Panelists stressed the urgency of updating national contingency plans to address emerging issues and ensure member states are equipped for a broad range of potential disasters.

COVID-19 spurred progress in biosecurity and biosafety across many countries, with various countries taking lessons from the pandemic to strengthen response plans.

However, despite this progress, gaps remain, particularly in integrating these lessons into comprehensive national disaster preparedness frameworks.





SESSION 6: WILDLIFE CONSERVATION





Session Moderator

*Ms. Susan Millward, CEO,
Animal Welfare Institute*

IMPROVING BIRD WELFARE AND CONSERVATION IN AFRICA: THE CASE OF VULTURES

Dr. Paul Kariuki reported that BirdLife International operates in 27 countries and supported initiatives in 40 more countries, focused on bird conservation. He stated that Africa hosted 2,528 bird species, with 269 globally threatened species due to agriculture. Agricultural expansion affects birds through habitat loss from land clearance, deforestation, and wetland destruction. Additionally, pesticides and other chemicals were toxic to birds, and BirdLife International's conservation strategies aim to mitigate these impacts by promoting sustainable practices and awareness.



*Dr. Paul Kariuki Ndang'ang'a, Regional Director-Africa,
BirdLife International*

He expressed concern on the threats facing wildlife welfare including logging, invasive species, climate change, and pollution. Vultures, for example, were particularly threatened, resulting in a decline by 97% in 50 years, mainly from poisoning. BirdLife International addressed these issues with strategies like anti-poisoning networks in Eastern Africa, vulture-safe zones in Southern Africa, and advocacy for bird-safe infrastructure in North Africa.

Dr. Kariuki concluded by highlighting BirdLife International's efforts including launching the West Africa Vulture Conservation Action Plan and retrofitting electricity poles in Ethiopia, with 816 bird species, to reduce vulture electrocutions.

THE POWER OF STORYTELLING AND EDUCATION TO INSPIRE EMPATHY FOR NATURE

Ms. Trish Sewe, representing Wildlife Direct, delivered a compelling presentation titled, The Power of Storytelling: Changing Hearts, Minds, and Laws to Protect Africa's Species. She began by introducing Wildlife Direct's vision, which sought to ensure the enduring survival of Africa's critical species. The organization's mission was to connect people to their wildlife and natural heritage, inspiring them to value and take action to conserve it. Ms. Sewe focused on how storytelling, beyond mere education, can drive an emotional and cultural transformation essential for meaningful conservation outcomes.

Ms. Sewe's presentation opened with a short video that depicted the relationship between the Maa community and their cattle, which is integral to their way of life. Cattle held deep significance for the Maa people, serving not just as economic assets but as symbols of their identity and culture. This example illustrated how storytelling can reveal the complex interdependencies between communities and nature, helping audiences connect on a personal level to conservation issues.

A central theme in Sewe's presentation was the "Triple Planetary Crisis"—climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. She emphasized that addressing these global challenges required more than policy reform and scientific innovation. It demanded a fundamental shift in culture and emotions. Storytelling, she argued, was a key instrument in this shift. By engaging people emotionally and culturally, storytelling created a personal resonance with these pressing issues, encouraging audiences to act on them.

Ms. Sewe outlined the core reasons why storytelling is so powerful in conservation. First, it makes complex ideas accessible by breaking them down into relatable narratives, allowing people to better understand and empathize with conservation issues.



Ms. Trish Sewe, Chief of Party, Wildlife Direct

Storytelling also creates an emotional connection that moves beyond statistics and engages people at a personal level, motivating them to care. Furthermore, storytelling serves as a cultural bridge, bringing diverse perspectives together and fostering mutual respect. Ms. Sewe highlighted how stories have the unique ability to move people from awareness to action, transforming knowledge into meaningful change.

During her presentation, Ms. Sewe also illustrated Wildlife Direct's initiatives that used storytelling to engage audiences. Team Sayari is an educational program operating in three African countries, reaching over 13,000 children. By targeting young audiences, Team Sayari aimed to nurture a lifelong connection to nature, embedding conservation values early on. Another similar initiative, the Nature Positive Kids Outreach Program, also sought to foster a conservation ethic among children, hoping to cultivate a generation that treasures and protects the natural world.

Finally, Ms. Sewe discussed Wildlife Direct's Wildlife Heroes TV, a platform that showcased the stories of local conservation champions. Through this show, the journeys of wildlife heroes are shared, spotlighting the dedication and resilience of individuals working to protect Africa's biodiversity. By bringing these stories to the forefront, Wildlife Direct not only inspires its viewers but also sends a powerful message that everyone has a role in conservation.

Ms. Trish Sewe concluded by underscoring that storytelling is not merely a communication tool but a strategic force in conservation. Through storytelling, people can form emotional bonds with nature, bridge cultural divides, and find inspiration to make a difference. Wildlife Direct's programs, such as Team Sayari and Wildlife Heroes TV, exemplify the organization's commitment to inspiring a new generation to appreciate and conserve Africa's rich biodiversity.

CLINICAL APPROACHES IN THE REHABILITATION OF AFRICAN GREY PARROTS: A UWEC SUCCESS STORY FROM RESCUE TO RELEASE



Dr. Victor Musiime, Uganda Wildlife Conservation Education Centre, Entebbe, Uganda

Victor Musiime delivered an informative presentation on the conservation efforts focusing on the African Grey Parrot, one of Africa's most iconic yet endangered bird species. He began by providing a brief history of the Uganda Wildlife Conservation Education Center (UWEC), which was established in 1952 by the British colonial government. UWEC has since become a vital institution in wildlife education and conservation, especially concerning the African grey parrot, which faced significant threats from habitat destruction and the illegal pet trade.

Dr. Musiime emphasized the importance of strict wildlife trade laws, habitat preservation, and public awareness to address the critical challenges facing African grey parrots. Conservation strategies included cracking down on the illegal pet trade and educating the public about the importance of keeping these parrots in the wild rather than as pets. He highlighted the centre's role in rescuing, rehabilitating, and releasing African Grey Parrots back into their natural habitats, which aligns with UWEC's broader mission to protect endangered species.

Further, he noted that the African Grey Parrot, native to the rainforests of West and Central Africa, is classified as Endangered due to extensive habitat loss and the illegal pet trade. UWEC's conservation efforts resulted in the rescue of over 800 parrots, with more than 550 successfully released back into the wild. These efforts were vital to maintaining parrot populations and sustaining the species in its native ecosystem.

Dr. Musiime provided insights into UWEC's structured rescue and rehabilitation process for African Grey Parrots. Each rescued parrot undergoes a thorough health evaluation, disease screening, and necessary veterinary treatments to ensure they are fit for release. To minimize the risk of disease transmission, he noted that the parrots are quarantined for a minimum of 30 days. During this period, UWEC closely monitors their health and behavior, assessing their readiness for reintegration into the wild. The center primarily employs a "soft release" method, gradually allowing the parrots to adapt to their natural environment before full release. This approach ensured the parrots have ample time to adjust and reduced post-release stress.

Dr. Musiime emphasized the importance of post-release monitoring, which included tracking bird populations, migration patterns, and collecting samples for ongoing research. He emphasized that these monitoring activities are crucial to understand the long-term success of their conservation efforts. He highlighted several research opportunities in African Grey Parrot conservation, which are vital for understanding and enhancing UWEC's efforts.

Key research areas include disease surveillance to identify and manage health risks, genetic diversity studies to ensure healthy breeding populations, behavioral research to better understand parrot social structures, and advanced veterinary diagnostics to improve treatment and rehabilitation outcomes. These research initiatives will contribute to building a comprehensive knowledge base to inform future conservation practices.

Dr. Musiime concluded by reiterating the critical role UWEC plays in conserving African Grey Parrots and protecting them from extinction. Through strict conservation laws, habitat protection, and targeted rescue and rehabilitation efforts, UWEC is actively working to reduce the threats facing this endangered species. The center's future plans, including GPS tracking and expanding research opportunities, demonstrate a forward-thinking approach to conservation. Dr. Musiime's insights highlighted how dedicated organizations like UWEC are essential in preserving Africa's wildlife heritage for future generations.

AFRICA CONSERVATION EDUCATION FUND: AN INTEGRATED CONSERVATION EDUCATION MODEL



Mr. Isaac Maina, Human-animal Co-existence Manager, Africa Network for Animal Welfare.

Mr. Isaac Maina, ANAW's Human-Animal Co-existence Manager, presented on the critical issue of bushmeat and the organization's initiatives to address wildlife conservation in Kenya. He began by distinguishing between bushmeat and game meat. While bushmeat refers to wildlife meat obtained illegally, game meat is legally sourced through licensed game farming. In Kenya, game meat production is limited to certain species, including ostrich, guinea fowl, quail, and crocodile. Mr. Maina highlighted that the bushmeat trade persists due to various factors such as poverty, cultural beliefs, and the commercial demand in markets like Bano in Kenya.

Mr. Maina explained that bushmeat hunting in Kenya was driven by multiple socio-economic and environmental factors. Key drivers included poverty, prolonged droughts, and unemployment, which push communities to rely on wildlife as a source of food and income. Additionally, the lack of policies that provide benefits to communities surrounding wildlife areas exacerbates the issue. Other contributing factors include accessible hunting methods and uncontrolled access to wildlife habitats, often facilitated by logging and deforestation. Various hunting techniques are employed to acquire bushmeat, including wire snares, spears, arrows, ground snares, trenches, bird traps, spikes, clamps, and the use of torches (lamping).

To counter the bushmeat crisis, Mr. Maina highlighted ANAW's collaboration with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) on de-snaring initiatives. This program involves removing snares set by poachers and rescuing injured animals. Then, ANAW had removed over **7,500** snares and saved more than **250** animals in Machakos, Taita Taveta, Kajiado, Nakuru, Kwale, and Kilifi counties. While effective in the short term, de-snaring alone cannot solve the problem. Mr. Maina emphasized that long-term success relied on educational initiatives to shift attitudes towards wildlife conservation.

As explained by Ms. Eunice Robai, ANAW's Capacity Building, Education & Awareness Manager, ANAW was deeply invested in wildlife education as a sustainable approach to conservation. Through Animal Welfare Clubs established in primary schools, the organization taught children about animal sentience and humane treatment of animals. The program started as a pilot project in **13** schools, and expanded to **57** schools, engaging over **17,000** students aged 6 to 14. Each club was led by a teacher and focused on fostering empathy, compassion, responsibility, and positive attitudes towards animals.



Ms. Eunice Robai, Capacity Building, Education & Awareness, Africa Network for Animal Welfare

In the club, pupils learn practical ways to prevent cruelty and participate in activities such as tree planting and cleanups, that help cultivate respect for wildlife and the environment. The goal is to build animal welfare awareness based on the Five Freedoms and to nurture a compassionate and considerate generation from an early age.

Ms. Robai noted the positive outcomes of the clubs, including improved perceptions of animals, continued environmental projects as school children progress through secondary school and partnerships with individuals who share similar conservation goals. By fostering awareness and humane attitudes, Ms. Robai noted that these clubs were creating a future citizenry with a deep respect for wildlife and environmental stewardship.



Dr. Brenda Oliwa Okumu-Partnership and Development, Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW)

Dr. Brenda Oliwa Okumu, ANAW's Education and Development Manager, discussed ANAW's Animal Conservation Education Fund (ACEF), a comprehensive program that addressed the root causes of poaching by integrating humane education with scholarships. By directly addressing factors such as poverty and lack of education, Dr. Brenda argued that ACEF helped create sustainable, long-term impacts in conservation. The program promoted interconnectedness between anti-poaching efforts, educational support, and humane education, which, in turn, provides communities with alternative livelihoods and reduces reliance on bushmeat.

Dr. Okumu called for partnerships with like-minded organizations and individuals to enhance the impact of ANAW's initiatives. Through de-snaring, wildlife education, and the ACEF program, ANAW is actively working to address bushmeat hunting and promote sustainable co-existence between communities and wildlife. The session demonstrated how education, compassionate action, and policy reform are essential to creating a long-term solution to bushmeat challenges and fostering a conservation-minded future generation.

TRANSBOUNDARY PARTNERSHIPS TO COMBAT ORGANIZED WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING



Etienne Lesage, Deputy Director, International Association of Lawyers (UIA)



Mr. Jim Karani, Director, Lawyers for Animal Protection in Africa (LAPA)

Mr. Jim Karani discussed the need for transboundary partnerships to tackle wildlife crime effectively across Africa. He emphasized that corruption is the single largest driver of wildlife crime, undermining conservation efforts and enabling the illegal wildlife trade. His insights focused on the enablers of corruption, the evolving tactics of traffickers, and the importance of unified legal and prosecutorial approaches across countries.

Mr. Karani explained that corruption fuels the illegal wildlife trade by allowing criminal networks to exploit gaps in the system. Individuals involved in wildlife trafficking often bribed key players along the trade route, including transporters, clearing and forwarding agents, customs officers, and verification officers. This network of corrupt enablers facilitates the movement of illegal wildlife products across borders, significantly impacting on endangered species. Without addressing these systemic issues, it becomes challenging to control wildlife crime effectively.

Mr. Karani demonstrated the innovative and increasingly sophisticated methods traffickers use to smuggle ivory and other wildlife products. In the past, traffickers would hide ivory in shipping containers alongside items like coffins or large amounts of timber being transported. However, as authorities became more vigilant, traffickers have adapted, using coffee and tea shipments to mask their illegal goods. This evolving approach to concealment allows traffickers to evade detection and move ivory across African countries and beyond. As Mr. Karani reported, estimates indicated approximately 40 tons of ivory, spread across 20 cases, circulating between Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, underscoring the need for collaborative regional efforts to disrupt trafficking routes.

According to Mr. Karani, while many African countries had strong wildlife protection laws, inconsistencies in enforcement and sentencing between countries undermined the effectiveness of these laws. Criminals extradited to certain jurisdictions often receive lighter sentences, which fails to deter future offenses and creates disparities in justice across the region. For effective wildlife crime deterrence, Mr. Karani argued that countries must harmonize their sentencing guidelines to ensure traffickers face severe consequences regardless of where they are prosecuted.

Mr. Karani proposed several solutions to strengthen transboundary efforts against wildlife crime. One essential measure was increased data sharing across East Africa, Africa as a whole, and internationally. By pooling information on trafficking routes, known offenders, and investigative methods, countries can coordinate more effectively and pre-empt criminal activity. Another key recommendation was multi-country prosecutions, where cases involving traffickers who operate across borders are handled collaboratively, leading to stronger and more consistent outcomes.

Mr. Etienne Lesage, a criminal lawyer and member of the International Association of Lawyers (UIA), discussed the role of legal education and training in building the capacity to address wildlife crime. He highlighted that lawyers must be prepared to handle wildlife crime cases, which often involve unique legal and ethical challenges. UIA organized training sessions and seminars focused on animal law and wildlife crime, equipping lawyers with the necessary expertise to advocate for wildlife protection within the legal system. Mr. Etienne emphasized that, while lawyers must defend their clients, they also have a responsibility to contribute to justice in wildlife cases and prevent exploitation of the legal system by criminals.

The speakers concluded with a call for stronger partnerships at all levels, stressing that combating wildlife crime requires coordinated efforts that transcend national borders. Through data sharing, multi-country prosecutions, and legal training, African countries and the international community can work together to close gaps exploited by traffickers. Their presentation underscored the need for a united front to address the root causes of wildlife crime, particularly corruption, and establish a robust legal framework that deters future offenses and protects Africa's invaluable wildlife heritage.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WILDLIFE CORRIDORS IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION



Ms. Gabriella Mutiso, Conservationist

Ms. Gabriella Mutiso, a 19-year-old aspiring wildlife veterinarian and conservationist, shared a compelling perspective on wildlife corridors. Opening with a powerful observation of grief as a universal experience, she likened the way humans and animals store memories. For animals, survival relies on ancient migratory paths, passed down naturally through generations, yet increasingly threatened by human expansion. She urged that humanity reconsider its approach to land, suggesting we are merely temporary stewards, not owners, of natural spaces.

Ms. Mutiso explored how Africa's rich cultural heritage had historically been community-centered, contrasting with today's individualism - a legacy of colonialism. She questioned the ethics of profiting from wildlife tourism when government inaction leaves animals and communities struggling.

Challenging African leaders, she highlighted the paradox of celebrating national symbols, like lions and elephants, while failing to protect them from habitat loss and human-wildlife conflict.

Her message revealed the devastating consequences of habitat fragmentation and land encroachment. Without corridors, animals face isolation, inbreeding, and extinction. Wildlife corridors, she argues, are vital for maintaining ecological balance, supporting regional water sources, reducing road accidents, and creating sustainable jobs. Reflecting on the endangered northern white rhinos, she emphasized the failure to protect these creatures as a shared tragedy.

Ms. Mutiso concluded with an impassioned plea for unity, urging Africa to see itself as one ecosystem. She reminded the audience that Africa's story is incomplete without its wildlife and that true heritage includes all living creatures. Only by safeguarding these corridors, she says, can we ensure a sustainable future, and only then can Africa's Hakuna Matata be spoken with sincerity.

a) Determining Illegal Ownership of Parrots in Uganda

The Uganda Wildlife User Rights Act of 2015 sets specific requirements for individuals who wish to keep certain wildlife species, including parrots. Under this legislation, some of the key requirements include:

- Ugandans may own up to two parrots, provided they pay a fee to the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA)
- Subject the parrots to routine veterinary check-ups.

Illegal ownership is flagged when these guidelines are not followed, with checks on those who bypass the licensing and veterinary requirements.

b) Incorporation of Wildlife Education in Schools

Conservation education initiatives, like those from the Uganda Conservation Education Program (UCEP) and the Uganda Wildlife Conservation Education Centre (UWEC), engage young students in hands-on conservation activities. Programs such as the Junior Vet Program and Junior Zookeeper Program give school children a chance to live a day in the life of conservationists, creating a foundation for future conservation advocacy. Further, community outreach programs and initiatives at places such as Busitema and Kome Islands in Lake Victoria, focus on bird conservation awareness, with training in birding and setting up eco-tourism facilities to showcase the economic value of avian wildlife.

c) Role of the Judiciary in Supporting Wildlife Conservation

While Kenya has strong environmental laws, their enforcement often falters in the courts due to delays in cooperation among stakeholders. Addressing international wildlife crime necessitates robust cross-border investigations and efficient data sharing. To enhance multi-country cooperation, stakeholders need to collaborate with local legal agencies to initiate investigations, facilitating smoother data flow across borders. Organizations like Lawyers for Animal Protection in Africa (LAPA), led by Mr. Karani, are actively engaged in promoting data sharing and capacity building efforts for regional investigations.

d) Protection of Released Parrots

UWEC ensures the protection of released parrots through research units and monitoring programs using solar-powered GPS trackers. Release sites are kept confidential to deter poaching, while ranger teams and intelligence units are deployed to monitor the parrots and track potential poachers.

e) Purpose of Parrot Breeding Programs at UWEC

The breeding of African Grey Parrots at UWEC is viewed as a conservation safeguard. Should the species face extinction pressures, breeding could ensure a sustainable population for reintroduction into the wild, supporting biodiversity conservation efforts.

f) Collaboration Between ANAW and the Ministry of Education for Youth Engagement

ANAW partners with the Ministry of Education to access schools thus enabling animal welfare awareness among younger pupils through Animal Welfare Clubs. These clubs promote humane education and animal welfare awareness among primary school children, building compassion and responsibility for wildlife from a young age.

g) AU-IBAR's Role in Transboundary Wildlife Issues

AU-IBAR's submission of an independent memo to the African Union underscores the need for transboundary cooperation in wildlife protection. The memo addresses issues such as evidence gathering, public investment, and sustainable management of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife resources.

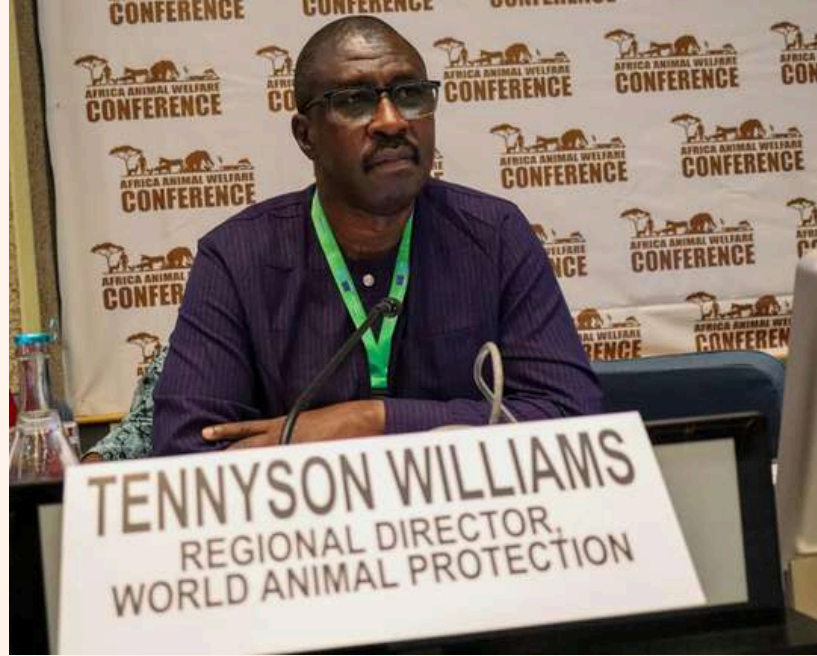
This aligns with the Lusaka Task Force and Interpol's role on providing investigative support, expertise and training to law enforcement practitioners worldwide, focusing on three major areas of transnational crime: terrorism, cybercrime and organized crime. However, over-duplication of efforts often weakens impact due to a lack of coordinated cooperation.





**SESSION 7:
AFRICAN UNION - INTERAFRICAN BUREAU
FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES (AU-IBAR)**

Unlocking the Obstacles to the Adoption of Animal Welfare Policies in Africa



Mr. Tennyson Williams, Regional Director, World Animal Protection

OPENING REMARKS: A REVIEW OF THE BARRIERS TO ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY ADOPTION IN AFRICA



Dr. Mwenda Mbaka, African Union-InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)

Dr. Mwenda Mbaka opened his presentation offering a comprehensive overview of the progress and challenges associated with the Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa (AWSA). A study conducted sought to identify barriers to the adoption of AWSA and propose actionable recommendations for its midterm review in 2025, aiming to enhance its effectiveness and ensure long-term sustainability. The study reached 34 countries across the continent, amounting to 63% of targeted participants, primarily chief veterinary officers and country animal welfare focal persons. In addition to the government input, he noted contributions from esteemed organizations such as Brooke East and West Africa, the Coalition for African Animal Welfare Organizations (CAAWO), the Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad (SPAN), World Animal Protection, and World Horse Welfare (WHW).

The findings highlighted significant regional disparities in the implementation of animal welfare policies and practices, revealing that East and Southern Africa had made notable advancements compared to persistent challenges in West and Central Africa. Dr. Mbaka provided historical context, tracing AWSA's origins to its adoption by African Union (AU) member states in 2017. This strategic framework was designed to integrate animal welfare into national, regional, and continental priorities, including food security, rural development, and environmental conservation. AWSA aligns with global frameworks such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (notably Goals 2, 3, 12, and 15), WOH standards, and Agenda 2063, which underscore its relevance to improving quality of life, promoting sustainable agriculture, and addressing environmental challenges.

The presentation recognized Africa's cultural heritage, which traditionally values animal welfare as part of Ubuntu principles, where animals are integral to livelihoods, ecosystems, and community traditions. However, Dr. Mbaka noted the tensions arising from modern agricultural demands and highlighted the challenges these pose to animal welfare, particularly in resource-constrained settings.

Key barriers to AWSA implementation identified in the report included governance limitations, financial constraints, insufficient political commitment, capacity-building deficits, and fragmented donor funding. Dr. Mbaka explained that resistance from political stakeholders often stems from a lack of clear data demonstrating the benefits of investing in animal welfare. He emphasized that robust data collection was essential to building a compelling case for increased investment and addressing these challenges. The lack of standardized data collection tools and inconsistent reporting practices further hindered progress, particularly in regions like West and Central Africa.

Dr. Mbaka also underscored the need to enhance training programs for animal welfare focal persons and stakeholders, ensuring alignment with modern technological advancements and practices. He stressed the importance of integrating AWSA principles across animal health, production, and environmental management sectors, leveraging the shared expertise of veterinarians, farmers, and conservationists to address complex interrelated challenges.

The recommendations from the report included increasing budgetary allocations, fostering public-private partnerships, empowering the African Platform for Animal Welfare (APAW), and integrating AWSA into national development strategies. Dr. Mbaka proposed rotational terms for focal persons to ensure diverse expertise and sector-wide ownership. He also advocated for the use of digital tools to facilitate data collection in rural areas and enhance monitoring and evaluation systems.

Dr. Mbaka highlighted the critical role of evidence-based advocacy in driving policy change. He urged stakeholders to strengthen data submission processes to AU-IBAR, emphasizing that data serves as a vital tool to justify investments and demonstrate AWSA's impact. He reiterated the importance of aligning animal welfare strategies with broader development goals, ensuring that Africa's approach remains both culturally rooted and forward-looking.

Dr. Mbaka concluded with a call to action for governments, organizations, and individuals to prioritize animal welfare, recognizing its essential role in fostering sustainable development, food security, and environmental resilience.

THE STATUS AND PROSPECTS FOR STRENGTHENING AQUATIC ANIMAL WELFARE IN AFRICA

Dr. Nelly Isyagi began her presentation by providing a detailed background on the governance and management of Africa's aquaculture sector, emphasizing its distinctiveness compared to terrestrial systems. She highlighted the sector's origins, shaped by the declining state of fisheries, characterized by dwindling fish populations and worsening economic conditions for fishermen. She noted that the sector's major challenges, both past and present, revolved around biosecurity, biosafety, and aquatic animal welfare, with these issues arising primarily due to anthropogenic factors, environmental degradation, and pollution. Dr. Isyagi explained that the interconnectedness and dynamic nature of aquatic ecosystems, such as the movement of water and aquatic animals, create unique challenges for the sector.

Unlike terrestrial systems, water cannot be fenced or easily controlled, which complicates biosecurity and sustainability efforts. The state of aquatic ecosystems directly affects animal health, biodiversity, public health, food safety, and market access, underscoring the need for comprehensive management strategies.

She elaborated on the 2005 Abuja Declaration, which called for significant investments to improve natural stock management, enhance aquaculture production, and bolster fish trade locally and globally. The declaration acknowledged the transient nature of ecosystems and emphasized participatory governance, involving stakeholders at all levels. She referenced the 2014 Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa, signed by all African Union Member States, as a foundational document guiding sustainable management and utilization of aquatic resources.

Dr. Isyagi outlined the vision of this policy, which aims to create an environment conducive to the sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture resources. This includes not just food production but all elements essential to sustaining aquatic animal life. The strategy aims to transform Africa's fisheries and aquaculture sectors to contribute to food security, livelihoods, and economic development.

The framework constituted seven pillars which were conservation and sustainable resource use, small-scale fisheries development, sustainable aquaculture development, responsible and equitable fish trade and marketing, strengthened regional and sub-regional cooperation, awareness enhancing and human capacity development and high-seas fisheries.

The presentation also highlighted the Africa Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM) as a key implementation tool, endorsed by all 55 African Union member states. The AFRM facilitates coordination, knowledge-sharing, advocacy, policy development, and resource mobilization.



Dr. Nelly Isyagi, Fisheries and Aquaculture Trade and Investment, Expert -AU-IBAR

It engages a wide array of stakeholders, including local communities, regional networks, think tanks, and public and private sector representatives, ensuring a holistic and inclusive approach.

Focusing on aquatic animal health, Dr. Isyagi discussed recent achievements under the AFRM, including annual continental workshops that integrate sessions on aquatic animal health and welfare. These workshops foster discussions among farmers, students, veterinarians, and policymakers, providing a platform for capacity building and knowledge exchange. Regional and continental networks have been established to support aquaculture producers, veterinarians, fish processors, traders, and fishermen.

She emphasized the importance of managing water quality through a risk-based approach as a preventative measure for sustaining aquatic animal health. Such efforts included the establishment of regional aquatic laboratory networks and the development of a community-based laboratory system to collect relevant data and inform policy decisions.

Dr. Isyagi concluded by addressing the ongoing review of Africa's water and aquatic environmental management guidelines, which currently prioritizes human health without adequately considering aquatic animal welfare. She stressed the necessity of creating a continental aquatic animal health and biosecurity strategy, aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 14, which should be finalized by 2027. This strategy aimed to integrate the needs of all aquatic life forms, recognizing their role in maintaining ecosystem health and supporting sustainable development across Africa.

ADVANCING FARMED FISH WELFARE IN AFRICA: LESSONS LEARNED FROM EGYPT AND KENYA



Mr. Wasseem Emam, Director, Ethical Seafood Research (ESR)

Mr. Wasseem Emam began by extending his appreciation to the conference organizers for the opportunity to shed light on the often-neglected topic of aquatic animal welfare. As the founder and director of ESR, Mr. Emam emphasized the organization's mission to elevate welfare standards for aquatic animals, not just in Africa but globally. His presentation sought to share insights from ESR's projects in Egypt and Kenya, particularly concerning farmed fish welfare. He also aimed to inspire stakeholders to join forces in improving conditions in aquaculture, a sector he identified as having immense potential for minimizing aquatic animal suffering in Africa.

Reflecting on his presentation at the Kigali conference the previous year, Emam noted that it had provided a broad overview of aquatic animal welfare, touching on wild capture fisheries, ornamental species, and animals in laboratories. This year, however, his focus was intentionally narrowed to aquaculture, a sector he regarded as pivotal for promoting sustainability and welfare improvements. He pointed out that aquaculture offered a pathway to meet the growing demand for seafood while addressing the pressing issue of animal suffering within this expanding industry.

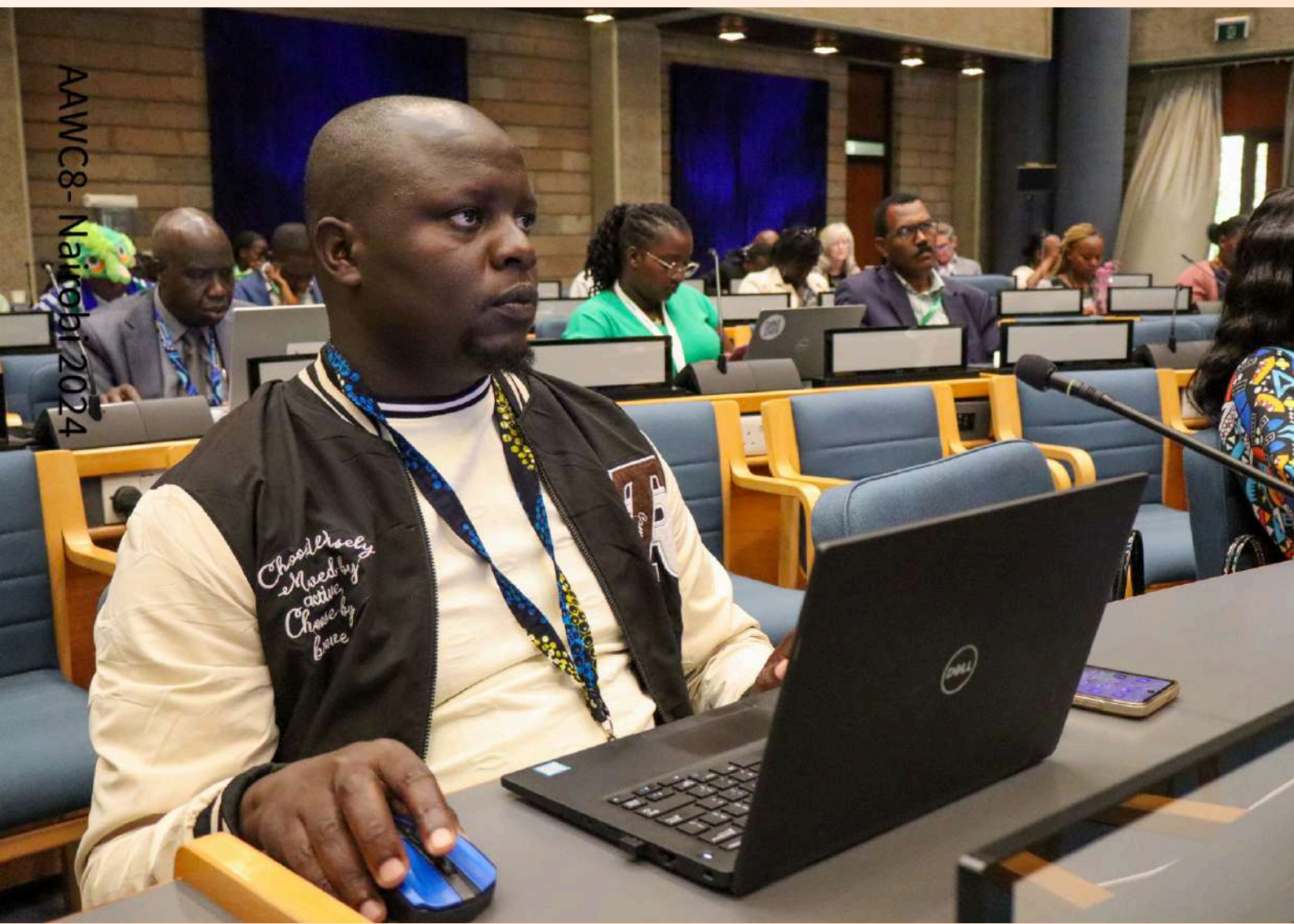
Turning to ESR's work in Egypt, Mr. Emam detailed findings from surveys conducted among tilapia farmers. The surveys revealed a significant knowledge gap. Many farmers had no prior training in animal welfare and were unfamiliar with an Arabic equivalent for the term. Nonetheless, the farmers demonstrated a willingness to learn and improve. ESR's workshops highlighted critical areas such as water quality monitoring, record-keeping, and humane harvesting practices. Despite limited prior exposure to these concepts, farmers actively engaged with the training sessions and expressed a strong desire to implement the welfare measures.

Mr. Emam highlighted a significant technological initiative in Egypt. ESR collaborated with farmers to introduce the Welfare App, a tool that enabled farmers to record and assess fish welfare practices systematically. The app's rollout proved highly impactful, with over 150 farmers trained, more than 3,000 welfare assessments conducted, and approximately 260 million tilapia positively affected by the project. He emphasized that the success of this initiative underscored the importance of combining technology with capacity-building to drive welfare improvements.

In Kenya, Mr. Emam reported that aquaculture, primarily focused on tilapia farming, was positioned as a promising avenue for addressing the demand-supply gap for fish. However, the sector faced unique challenges, including high feed costs, limited technical knowledge, and a lack of awareness about animal welfare. Surveys conducted by ESR revealed that these challenges hindered the industry's growth and compromised welfare standards. To address these issues, ESR partnered with local stakeholders to design tailored workshops, providing practical solutions and fostering a culture of continuous learning among farmers. The feedback from these sessions was overwhelmingly positive, indicating a strong appetite for knowledge and change within the sector.

Throughout his presentation, Mr. Emam underscored the common thread linking ESR's findings in Egypt and Kenya: a widespread lack of familiarity with animal welfare concepts and practices. However, he was equally struck by the enthusiasm of stakeholders to embrace training and adopt welfare measures once they understood their importance. Key recommendations included improving water quality monitoring, establishing robust record-keeping systems, and implementing humane harvesting techniques. He emphasized that these interventions, while straightforward, required sustained effort and collaboration to achieve meaningful impact.

Mr. Emam concluded his presentation with a call to action, urging stakeholders to prioritize aquatic animal welfare as an integral component of sustainable aquaculture development. He noted that ESR's achievements would not have been possible without the collaborative spirit of its partners, aligning perfectly with the conference's overarching theme of collective action. By sharing knowledge, leveraging technology, and fostering partnerships, he believed that the aquaculture sector could become a model for integrating welfare into economic development.



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ANIMAL WELFARE: SYNERGIES AND CHALLENGES

Dr. Elynn Njeri delivered a comprehensive presentation on the synergies and challenges between environmental sustainability and animal welfare. She began by emphasizing the necessity of integrating ethical animal welfare practices into sustainability efforts, noting that such integration promotes ecosystem preservation while enhancing the well-being of both animals and humans. She stressed that frameworks like the African Union's Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa provide a valuable blueprint for achieving these goals.



Dr. Elynn Njeri, Animal Welfare Expert, AU-IBAR

Highlighting the interconnectedness of environmental health, biodiversity, and human livelihoods, she argued for cohesive strategies that reflect a One Health approach, which links the health of humans, animals, and the environment.

She identified several key synergies that illustrated how environmental sustainability and animal welfare were mutually reinforcing. For instance, improved animal welfare practices could mitigate habitat destruction and pollution, enhance biodiversity, and support sustainable resource use. These practices also reduce the risk of zoonotic diseases, benefiting public health and promoting resilient ecosystems.

Despite these potential benefits, Dr Njeri pointed out that significant challenges impeded progress in this area. She explained that Africa's growing population, rapid urbanization, and climate change pressures created a heightened demand for resources, often at the expense of environmental and animal welfare priorities. In support of this, she cited a case of human-wildlife interactions in Botswana, where increased elephant populations have led to land destruction and ethical dilemmas regarding species conservation. Other challenges included resource constraints, policy fragmentation, cultural practices contributing to overgrazing, and a general lack of public awareness about the interconnectedness of these issues.

To illustrate the practical application of integrated approaches, Dr Njeri presented several case studies. In Namibia, community-based natural resource management programs have empowered local populations to manage and benefit from wildlife, reducing human-wildlife conflicts and bolstering conservation efforts. In Kenya, rotational grazing practices in Laikipia have not only enhanced livestock health but also improved soil quality and supported biodiversity. Similarly, habitat restoration in Ethiopia's Bale Mountains has protected endangered species while stabilizing ecosystems. Dr Njeri also highlighted zoonotic disease prevention programs in West Africa, which prioritize humane livestock management to minimize disease risks, and South Africa's rewilding initiatives in the Greater Kruger area, which transform former farmlands into thriving natural habitats.

In her conclusion, Dr Njeri called for a unified and integrated approach to overcome the challenges and harness the synergies between animal welfare and environmental sustainability. She recommended prioritizing habitat restoration, promoting sustainable farming practices, enforcing comprehensive legislation, incorporating these topics into education systems, and investing in research and innovation. She underscored the importance of collaboration among governments, NGOs, local communities, and international organizations to create a balanced ecosystem where humans and animals coexist harmoniously.

Through her narrative, Dr Njeri demonstrated how addressing the nexus of environmental sustainability and animal welfare could pave the way for a future that aligned with both the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals. Her presentation was a compelling call to action, emphasizing the need for collective efforts to ensure a healthier and more equitable world for all.





SESSION 8: UNDERSTANDING ANIMAL SENTIENCE: SCIENCE, ETHICS AND POLICY





*Michael O'Brien Onyeka,
Executive Vice President,
Nature for Justice*

KEYNOTE SPEECH: UNDERSTANDING ANIMAL SENTIENCE: SCIENCE, ETHICS AND POLICY

Dr. Mwenda Mbaka took the stage and opened the session with his keynote speech. He emphasized the integration of African cultural and ethical perspectives with modern scientific approaches to animal welfare. He highlighted that in traditional African societies, animals hold deep socio-economic, cultural and spiritual significance, serving as companions, sustenance providers, and symbols of heritage. This understanding is reflected in the Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa (AWSA), which aligns with traditional African values with modern frameworks to enhance animal welfare for human, environmental, and economic benefits.



Dr. Mwenda Mbaka, Animal Welfare Expert

Central to the AWSA is the recognition of animal sentience, acknowledging animals' capacity to experience emotions and its implications for welfare policies. Scientific evidence shows that stress in animals negatively affects their health and productivity, reinforcing the need for humane treatment. This approach is rooted in traditional African ethics, such as Ubuntu, which emphasizes interconnectedness and communal responsibility for animal care. Policies informed by these principles can lead to better animal productivity, sustainable agricultural practices, and economic stability while preserving cultural heritage.

Dr Mbaka further argued for policies that balance global trends with African realities, advocating for humane and culturally relevant farming practices. He cautioned against adopting factory farming systems that conflict with traditional African animal care values, as they could erode pro-welfare practices over time. Instead, he called for frameworks that incorporate traditional knowledge systems, ethical farming methods, and sustainable development, aligning animal welfare with Africa's unique socio-economic and cultural contexts.

In conclusion, Dr Mbaka urged for partnerships among governments, NGOs, the private sector, and academic institutions to promote animal welfare through culturally sensitive, science-backed strategies. He recommended integrating animal sentience into national policies and called for a Nairobi declaration to resist harmful industrial farming practices while fostering humane and sustainable agricultural systems that uphold African values.

The panel discussion featured Jim Karani, General Counsel at Lawyers for Animal Protection in Africa (LAPA), Yolanda Eisenstein, President at Animal Law Commission, Alexis Olds Head of Southern Africa, Compassion in World Farming, and Raphael Kinoti, CEO of Brooke East Africa, provided deep insights into the cultural, ethical, and practical dimensions of animal welfare in Africa.

A primary point raised by the panel was the recognition of animals as sentient beings capable of experiencing feelings. This view aligns with Africa's Ubuntu philosophy, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of all living things. Panelists noted how this philosophy supports a cultural respect for animals, viewing them as integral to larger ecosystems and reflecting qualities that influence African naming traditions. For instance, a person with the name of a giraffe may be noted for farsightedness, symbolizing the mutual respect between humans and animals.

The panel also discussed utilitarian ethics, highlighting the value of animal welfare from a practical perspective. Owners of working animals, for instance, are motivated to care for their animals because of the benefit they receive in return. This ethical framework encourages responsible treatment of animals and recognizes their contributions to human livelihoods.

Religious beliefs were also cited to have significant influence on animal welfare, with many African cultures viewing animals as sacred. This belief system inherently discourages cruelty, as the sacredness attributed to animals serves as a moral foundation against mistreatment.

The conversation transitioned towards the global trend on plant-based diets, noting that while this shift is gaining traction in developed nations, it may not be practical for Africa. Panelists highlighted Africa's unique cultural and economic context, where plant-based diets may not be viable or sufficient to meet nutritional needs. A one-size-fits-all approach to diet and welfare advocacy may not fully address Africa's realities, and initiatives should therefore consider regional contexts and practicalities.

Overall, the panel discussion underscored the need for a culturally sensitive approach to animal welfare in Africa, one that respects local values, traditions, and economic conditions while promoting ethical treatment and care for animals.



HELLEN AURA
MODERATOR

ALEXIS OLDS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PUBLIC AFFAIRS

DR. HIVER BOUSSIN
RUBEN

JANE NJUGUNA
PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER

SESSION 9: CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD



IMPLEMENTATION STATUS ON UNEA'S ANIMAL WELFARE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NEXUS RESOLUTION



Dr. Abdelkader Bensada, Programme Management Officer, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Dr. Abdelkader Bensada took the stage and geared the conference towards discussing the Animal Welfare, Environment and Sustainable Development Nexus Resolution, which was adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) on March 2, 2022, Nairobi, Kenya. It was sponsored by 7 Member States: Ghana, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Pakistan.

He informed the delegates that the resolution requested,

“The Executive Director of UNEP, subject to the availability of financial and human resources, to produce a report, in close collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization and the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), as well as with the One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP), on the nexus between animal welfare, the environment and sustainable development, identifying key partners and stakeholders to consult, where relevant, in the preparation of the report, and preparing a summary of the findings for consideration by Member States.”

It also requested the Executive Director to submit the report for peer review by Member States and to report to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) at its sixth session.

Dr Bensada outlined the progress timeline of the Animal Welfare Nexus Report. After its adoption, a series of activities happened in 2023. An international consultant recruited May to December 2023 to assist the Ecosystems/Biodiversity on Land Branch team with implementation and an inception report was produced. A steering group constituting UNEP, FAO, WOAH, WHO and OHHLEP was established and had met four (4) times.

He also stated that a call for information had been sent to Member States, stakeholders and WOAH animal welfare focal points. The dissemination activities took place in Kenya, Morocco, Rwanda, and Spain. He added that the resource mobilization report and scoping report had been delivered and peer reviewed by UNEP by the end of 2023 (<https://open.unep.org/resolution/outcome-report/479>).

In 2024, the progress update had been provided, and the scoping report had been presented at UNEA 6 (UNEP/EA.6/5). UNEP was awaiting voluntary financial contributions. Despite UNEP's continued efforts to mobilize resources for implementation of the resolution, no external resources were mobilized or received for the resolution by September 2024.

Dr Bensada conveyed information on the Scoping Report. He gave highlights of the background of the scoping report. The report provides a detailed outline of methodology, process and budget needs to implement the resolution and produce a comprehensive and consultative Nexus Report based on best practices. It recommends a methodological approach with a range of possible formats with different resource requirements and proposes an annotated outline for the areas of inquiry to be included in the full Nexus Report.

He clarified that the report did not undertake a systematic characterization of all possible human-animal, human-environment, animal-environment or human-animal- environment interactions relevant to the AWESDE nexus and attempt to determine causality or undertake a systemic mapping of the nexus.

He mentioned that the Scoping Report follows a two-pronged approach from a scientific and practical perspective accommodating limited time and budget available. It followed an initial systematic literature review. In alignment with the resolution mandate, the guiding policy question was *“What is the evidence available on the nexus between animal welfare, environment, and sustainable development?”* He cited that a total of 100 individual abstracts covering different themes including food systems, aquaculture, economics, education, governance, foundation concepts and trade were reviewed. Over 70% of abstracts covered food systems, mostly around production and consumption, with a number also targeting trade and economics of food systems.

A Call for Information was pursued. It was circulated to all UNEA Member State representatives through UNEP's governance body and to key stakeholder organizations between July 14 to August 15, 2023. As part of collaboration work, WOAHA also circulated to animal welfare focal points and recommended them to contact their UNEA country representative to aid coordinate a single country response to the survey. Dr Bensada took the opportunity to outline the key findings.

It proposed that the AWESDE Nexus report was structured following discreet themes arranged in stand-alone chapters. This enabled a robust systematic analysis approach of the animal welfare-environment-sustainable development linkages in distinct but connected chapters. It introduced and proposed an AWESDE Drivers, Pressures, State, and Impact (DPSI) Framework for this analysis. It suggested that priority areas relevant to the environment, aligning with UNEP's mandate, may be identified.

He explained the relevance to UNEP as the programming context. The resolution notes that the health and welfare of animals, sustainable development and the environment are connected to human health and wellbeing, as well as that animal welfare can contribute to addressing environmental challenges. The 2019 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) highlights animal welfare as an issue to be addressed by the UN System and states that *“Strong governance should safeguard the well-being of both wildlife and domesticated animals with rules on animal welfare embedded in transnational trade”*. However, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) make no mention of animal welfare.

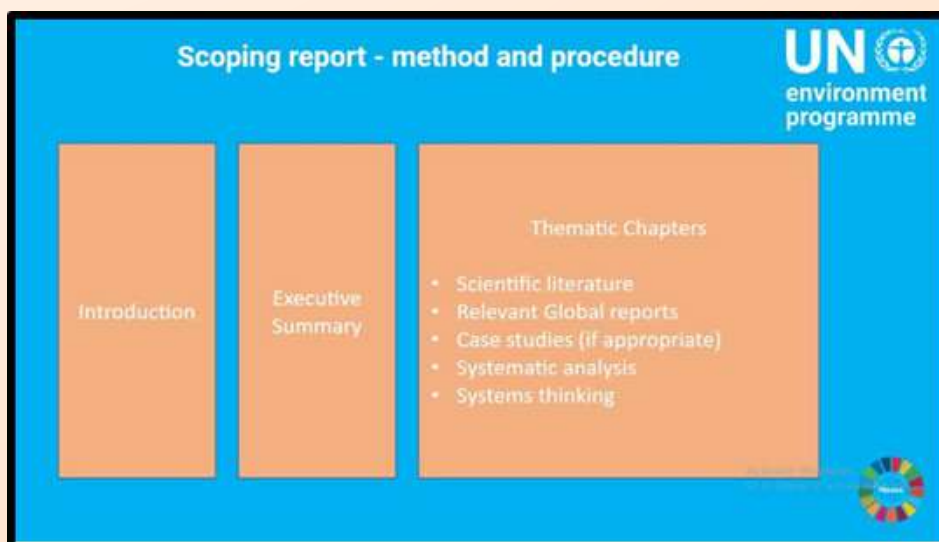
He stated that several UNEA resolutions and programmes (both operationally opened and closed) could be synergic to the AWESDE Nexus. This include, but are not limited to:

- Resolution 1/3 (Illegal trade in wildlife)
- Resolution 2/8 (Sustainable consumption and production)
- Resolution 2/14 (Illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products)
- Resolution 3/4 (Environment and health)
- Resolution 4/1 (Innovative pathways to achieve sustainable consumption and production)
- Resolution 4/10 (Innovation on biodiversity and land degradation)
- Resolution 4/14 and Resolution 5.2/2 (Sustainable nitrogen management)
- Resolution 5.2/7 (Sound management of chemicals and waste or the Kunming- Montreal Framework)

He mentioned that the AWESDE Nexus Report could also consider synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) administered by UNEP.

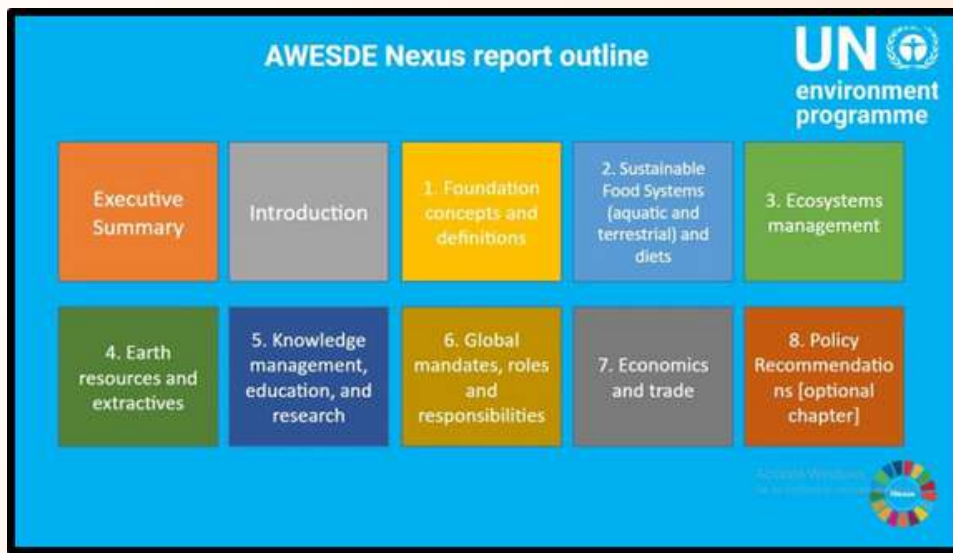
Dr Bensada stated that the report covered a global scope and all sectors and business types relevant to the AWESDE Nexus across terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems.

He mentioned that it applied a systems approach to identify key thematic areas, global tools, policies and relevant organizations where the AWESDE Nexus is relevant, systematically review AWESDE linkages for each of the thematic areas, analyze the existence of ‘interlinkages’ (and their ‘causality’) between AWESDE Nexus elements that include animal welfare and the environment, documenting, where possible, causality, directionality and strength/importance, identify priority areas of relevance for the environment, analyze the existence of interlinkages and AWESDE Nexus elements within global tools and policies and provide recommendations to consider how trade- offs could be managed, mitigated and synergies maximized where possible.



(Source: UNEP, 2024)

Dr. Bensada mentioned that the literature reviews per theme area shall be undertaken. He informed delegates that there was a core team of at least eight (8) lead authors. UNEP worked in collaboration with FAO, WOA and WHO, UNEP Member States and other stakeholders. The steering group oversight is constituted by representatives of UNEP, FAO, WOA and WHO to ensure close collaboration with representatives of these global organizations as per the resolution mandate.



(Source: UNEP, 2024)

CLOSING SESSION



Hon. Justice John Mativo, Judge, Court of Appeal, Kenya

Hon. Justice John Mativo began by recognizing the delegates as a distinguished gathering of professionals who represented many agencies of vast backgrounds and were united by a common goal of the need to promote and protect animal welfare.

Deducing from the presentations given in the previous few days, he recalled thoughts he had shared in a different meeting at the Ol Pejeta Conservancy. He cited that,

***“The impact of wildlife offences on the survival of the species underlines the need for strong penalties, which reflect the harm caused, to be imposed at all levels within the judicial system for wildlife offences. Even though they have the necessary legislation, in practice the majority of cases result in sentences that do not provide an appropriate deterrent to offenders or take account of the full range of sentencing options available to the magistrate or judge.*”**

The laws that exist for some offences such as environmental protection, conservation and protection of wildlife are seen as technical or regulatory offences. These have been described by a judge in the United Kingdom as “acts which are not criminal in the true sense but acts which in the public interest are prohibited under statute.” Such a view undoubtedly affects perceptions of moral culpability in terms of real crime and how such crimes are treated right from arrest to conviction and sentencing. There is an apparent lack of seriousness attached to wildlife trade offences.”

Judge Mativo stated that he was recalling the quote to establish that a person charged with a criminal offence under the Penal Code is treated as a criminal. Unfortunately, people charged under the wildlife offences are not treated as criminals. In fact, he emphasized, a person convicted of a wildlife offence would not be perceived as a criminal.

He declared that time had come to stop treating wildlife offences as mere regulatory offences. In Kenya, the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act created a category of offences which could be classified as serious crimes within the meeting of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The Act also created a series of offences which are aimed at discouraging those who assist forgers and traffickers.

He also informed the delegates that the Act also created public rights that include:

- Compensation for crops and property damage by wildlife,
- An obligation to offer the public an engagement including public consultation in relation to the creation of national parks and reserves
- The right for the members of the public to petition the court directly in relation to offenders.

The Act complimented and amplified other natural resource and management legislations. Thus, offences under this act must be viewed as offences hurting the environment. The need for professionalism to promote animal welfare was more important then, than ever before. It would be even more important in the future as human beings are faced with increasing interaction between people and their interests which include many different perceptions about animal welfare.

Wildlife conservation and management was faced with many challenges leading to a decline of wildlife numbers including change in land use and tenure resulting in shrinking wildlife habitat and increased poaching for profits and trading in bush meat.

He deduced that the conference could not have come at a better time than then. He commended the conference coordinators and the presenters of the impactful topics. He stated that the gathering was the result of a truly professional cooperative effort. The exchange of information would benefit not only those who were present but those who would access the presentations at a later date. He parted with a word of thanks for the opportunity to make the remarks.



CLOSING REMARKS



Dr. Allan Azegele, Director of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Republic of Kenya

Dr Allan Azegele recognized the delegates, both online and in person, and shared greetings with all present. He stated that he was honored and humbled to address the distinguished congregation of delegates from across the world during the 8th Africa Animal Welfare Conference in Nairobi. He acknowledged that animal welfare matters were critical in the domestic space and in the wild. He advised that human beings should consider the ever-growing population and especially the youth at approximately 1.2 billion, between the ages of 15 and 24 years of age. They account for 16% of the global population. He noted that the bulk of the young people were in the African continent which has the youngest population worldwide with 70% in the Sub-Saharan African region under the age of 30.

Dr Azegele mentioned that with the increasing population, was the increasing demand for proteins. They would need more space and there would be a need to invade the forests which were inhabited by wild animals. Some of the animals existed in unique ecosystems that when disrupted, human beings would find emerging diseases that are rare to humankind.

The world was recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic that was alleged to come from the bats. It was a disease of the wild. It was underscored how interconnected human beings, animals and the environment were. The pandemic demonstrated how a zoonotic disease could impact on human health and the welfare of animals. As human beings recovered from the pandemic, it was important that they looked deeper and were conscious of how they handled animals at the domestic level.

Kenya had made specific strides to ensure that the enabling legislation in place saw to it that animal welfare matters were addressed. The first legislation the country had, Protection of Animals Act (Cap 360), was being revised to the Animal Welfare Act which would bring together all stakeholders as animal welfare matters were a shared responsibility. The engagement would be based on the governance structure of the role of the National and County governments, the role of civil society and research in ensuring that the welfare and the defined freedoms for the animals are addressed.

It was his belief that the conference was a refreshing opportunity for discussing ideas, sharing experiences, and learning lessons from professionals and practitioners from different parts of the world, especially on the need for human beings, animals and the environment to co-exist harmoniously in this rapidly changing environment in the 21st century.

As a country, the delegates would be keen to follow up on the resolutions, take forward the recommendations and make efforts to implement the outcomes. He was hopeful that by the following conference, they would give feedback on how far the implementation has gone. He thanked the organizers of the conference for choosing Kenya as the host of the 8th edition of the continental conference and hoped they had time to tour the city. He thanked the UNEP, the AU-IBAR and ANAW for their tireless effort in making the conference a success.

He then declared the conference closed.



CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

- 1** Urge the African governments and Africa Union Commission (AUC) to reform current food systems to be more sustainable and welfare friendly for enhanced animal welfare and environmental protection.
- 2** Urge African governments and higher learning institutions to promote and adopt practical alternatives to the use of animals in education, testing and research.
- 3** Urge African governments to adopt and encourage indigenous knowledge and cultural practices to include women and youth in advancing the animal welfare agenda in the continent.
- 4** Urge African Union Commission (AUC) to promote strategic partnerships among governments and local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to drive reforms and include a coordinated disaster intervention in the animal welfare and environmental sectors.
- 5** Encourage partnership with institutions in different countries for mutual legal assistance, to establish joint multi-country investigations and prosecutions.
- 6** Urge African governments to fund for actualization and implementation of Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa (AWSA). Encourage the effective integration of AWSA in Member States national development strategies and policies. Further, encourage sustainable management and utilization of fisheries and aquaculture resources.



ANNEX I: PROGRAMME

8th Africa Animal Welfare Conference – Action 2024

Theme: Partnership Actions to Improve Animal Welfare and Environmental Sustainability

Venue: United Nations Complex, Nairobi, Kenya

Date: 30 September -02 October 2024

PROGRAMME

Day 1: Monday 30 September 2024

8.30-9.00 am.	Arrival and registration of delegates
OPENING SESSION Moderator: Tennyson Williams , Director for Africa, World Animal Protection	
09.00-09.30 a. m	Welcome Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme● Dr. Huyam Salih, Director, African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)● Prof. James Nkansah-Obrempong, Chair, Board of Directors, Africa Network for Animal Welfare
9.30-10.00 a.m.	Special Remarks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Tennyson Williams, Director for Africa, World Animal Protection and Conference Organizing Committee chair

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Philippe Tamini, Director General of the National Office for Protected Areas, Ministry of Environment, Water and Sanitation, representing Hon. Dr Roger Baro, Minister for Environment, Water and Sanitation, Burkina Faso ● Hon. Lelise Neme, Director General of the Ethiopian Environmental Authority ● Hon Aden Duale, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Environment Climate Change and Forestry, Republic of Kenya
10.00-10.05	Short break (delegates remain seated)
10.05-10.30 a.m.	Keynote Address and Official Opening: H.E. Dr William S. Ruto , President and Commander in Chief of the Defense Forces of The Republic of Kenya
10.30-10.35 am	Break (delegates remain seated)
10.35-11.05 a.m.	<p>Moderators: Hellen Aura, Nation Media Group and Josiah Ojwang, Conference Director</p> <p>Goodwill Messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dr. Luther Anakur Bois – Regional Director, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) ● Dr. James Yeates – CEO, World Federation for Animals ● Susan Millward - CEO, Animal Welfare Institute ● Andrea Gavinelli, Head of Unit, Animal Welfare, European Union ● Franck Berthe, The World Bank ● Dr. Bernadette Abela-Ridder – World Health Organization ● Daniela Battaglia – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) ● Dr. Patrick Bestiaensen – World Organization for Animals (WOAH)
11.05-11.30 am	Tea/Coffee Break
11.30-11.50 am	Africa Animal Welfare Conference Impact Review: A Look at the Past, Present, and Future, Dr David Obiero – Masai Mara University
SESSION 1: Innovations, Education, and Emerging Trends in Animal Welfare 11.50 -01.50 pm. Session Moderator: Prof. James Herbert Williams , Arizona State University, USA	
11.50-12.05 pm	Sustainable plant-based food systems, Abigail Mukonyo , Thrive Philanthropy

12.05-12.20 pm	Just Transition from Industrial Animal Production to Equitable, Humane and Sustainable Food Systems, Dr. Patrick Muinde , World Animal Protection
12.20-12.35 pm	AI Collaborations to Protect Animals and the Environment, Yolanda Eisenstein , Animal Law Commission
12.35pm-12.50 pm	Building a more Humane Community through Human-Animal connection, Prof. Phil Tedeschi , University of Denver, USA.
12.50-01.05 pm	Animal welfare perspectives from Asia, Zhou Zunguo , Compassion in World Farming, China.
01.05-1.20 pm	Humane Innovations and Replacement: Case studies to illustrate the curriculum of an ideal veterinary degree, Nick Jukes , InterNICHE, United Kingdom.
1.20-1.50 pm	Q and A
1 .50-2.50 pm	Lunch
SESSION 2: A Farm and Working Animals (Part A) 2.50-4.50 p.m. Session Moderator: Rubina James , Director, Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG)	
2.50-3.05pm	Progress of cage-free chicken campaigns in Africa, Aurelia Adhiambo , Africa Lead, Open Wing Alliance
3.05-3.20 pm	Human-Animal Interface in Urban Areas: A Holistic Approach to reducing the transmission of Rabies in Masvingo, Zimbabwe, Nancy Makuvise , Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe
3.20-3.35 pm	Hike in price of diesel and its effects on health and welfare of traction animals: a study of Taraba State, Nigeria, Moses Gani Umaru and Ezekiel Yudaunda Waba , Federal Polytechnic, Bali, Nigeria.
3.35 -3.50 pm	Implementing Farmed Animal Welfare Training: Successes, Experiences and Scale-Up, Dr Kikiope O. Oluwarore and Ilunamien E. Aisedion , OHDI, Nigeria.
3.50-4.20 pm	Q and A
4.20-4.50 pm	Plenary Session for reporting back on breakout sessions 2A and 2B
SESSION 2 B: Farm and working animals (Part B) 2.50-4.50 p.m. Session Moderator: Alexis Olds – CEO, Compassion in World Farming, Southern Africa	
2.50-3.05 pm	African Union Decision on Donkey Species Preservation in Africa, Dr. Hiver Boussini , AUIBAR

3.05-3.20 pm	Case study of working donkey welfare in the Mwea rice belt, Kenya, Jane Njuguna , Animal Health Officer
3.20-3.35 pm	Case Study of SPANA and TAWESO Partnership for Emergency Response in Northern Tanzania, Martin Kahema , Tanzania.
3.35-3.50	Positive Cities, Patrick Gerard , Director Advocacy, ICAM
3.50-4.20 pm	Q and A
4.20-4.50 pm	Plenary Session for reporting back on breakout sessions 2A and 2B
4.50-5.20 pm	Tea/Coffee
- *****END OF DAY ONE*****	
Day 2: Tuesday 01 October, 2024	
SESSION 3: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) 09.00 am-1.00 p.m. Session Moderator: Isaiah Otieno, UNEP	
09.00-09.20 am	UNEP Governing bodies: Structure and functions of UNEA, Radhika Ochalik , UNEP [Ulf to Introduce Radhika]
09.20-09.30 a.m.	Question and answer session
09.30-10.15 a.m.	The Outcomes of UNEA-6, Preparations towards UNEA-7 and the Role of Major Groups and Stakeholders Ulf Bjornholm , UNEP.
10.15-10.30 a.m.	Question and answer session
10.30-11.00 am	Tea/Coffee Break
11.00-11.30 a.m.	Opportunities for Major groups to Engage at UNEP and UNEA, David Ombisi , UNEP
11.30 a.m.-12.00 p.m.	UNEP Accreditation Process, Melissa Ngilandala , UNEP
12.00—01.00 p.m.	Question and Answer
1.00-2.00 pm	Lunch
Session 4 A: Working Group on Africa Animal Welfare Conference Evaluation Report 2.00-3.30 p.m. Session Moderator: Isaiah Otieno	

2.00-2.30 pm	Presentation of Highlights of the AAWC Evaluation Report, Dr David Obiero , Masai Mara University
2.30-3.30 pm	Discussion
SESSION 4 B: Animal Welfare, Environmental Conservation and Development	
2.00-3.30 pm	
Session Moderator: Dan Oduor , Stawisha Africa Initiative	
2.00-2.20 pm	Enhancing animal welfare through nature-based solutions, Charles Karangwa , Global Head of Nature Based Solutions Centre, IUCN, Switzerland.
2.20-2.40 pm	Animal welfare in development cooperation, Karin Siegmund , WTS and Dr Jean Claude Masengesho , Rwanda Animal Welfare Organization (RAWO)
2.40-3.00 pm	Shifting trade routes of live animals' export by sea, Dr Bryce Marock , NSPCA, South Africa.
3.00-3.30 pm	Q and A
3.30-4.00 pm	Tea/Coffee Break
Session 5: Disasters and Animal Welfare	
4.00-5.30 pm	
Session Moderator: John Forelli - Stress Management Consultant	
4.00-4.15 pm	Disaster Preparedness and Response/Management in Animal Resource Sector in Africa Prof. James Wabacha , AU-IBAR
4.15-4.30 pm	Effects of floods on animal welfare in East Africa: Dr. Thomas Kahema , Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Dr. Dennis Bahati , Kenya.
4.30-4.45 pm	The state of animals during climate-related and environmental disasters in West Africa, a case for emergency animal welfare, Abdul Rahman Safian , West African Centre for the Protection of Animal Welfare (WACPAW), Accra, Ghana.
4.45-5.00 pm	Animal Disaster Management Law and how African Nations can Collaborate to Minimize Disaster-Related Harm to Animals, Dr. Steve Glassey and Mark Anderson , Animal Avec. New Zealand.
5.00-5.30 pm	Q and A
*****END OF DAY TWO*****	
Day 3: Wednesday 02 October, 2024	

SESSION 6: Wildlife Conservation	
8.30 am-10.30 am	
Session Moderator: Susan Millward – CEO, Animal Welfare Institute (AWI)	
8.30-8.45 a.m.	Improving bird welfare and conservation in Africa: the case of vultures, Dr. Paul Kariuki Ndang’ang’a , Regional Director-Africa, Birdlife International
8.45-9.00 a.m.	The power of storytelling and education to inspire empathy for nature, Trish Sewe , Wildlife Direct.
9.00-9.15 a.m.	Clinical Approaches in the Rehabilitation of African Grey Parrots: a UWEC success story from rescue to release, Dr. Victor Musiime , Uganda Wildlife Conservation Education Centre, Entebbe, Uganda.
9.15-9.30 a.m.	Africa Conservation Education Fund: an integrated conservation education model, Dr Brenda Oliwa-Okumu, Eunice Robai and Isaac Maina , Africa Network for Animal Welfare
9.30- 9.45 a.m.	The importance of wildlife corridors in Wildlife Conservation, Gabriella Mutethya Mutiso , Laikipia Conservancy
9.45-10.00 a.m.	Transboundary Partnerships to Combat Organized Wildlife Trafficking – Jim Karani ; and Etienne Lesage
10.00-10.30 a.m.	Q and A
10.30-11.00 a.m.	Tea/Coffee Break
SESSION 7: African Union -Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)	
11.00 am -1.00 pm.	
Session Moderator: Tennyson Williams – Regional Director, World Animal Protection	
Session Theme: Unlocking the Obstacles to the Adoption of Animal Welfare Policies in Africa	
11.00 am-11.15 a.m.	Opening Remarks: A Review of the Barriers to Animal Welfare Policy Adoption in Africa, Dr Hiver Boussini , AU-IBAR
11.15-11.35 a.m.	The status and prospects for strengthening aquatic animal welfare in Africa; Nelly Isyagi ; Fisheries and Aquaculture Trade and Investment, Expert -AU-IBAR
11.35 am-11.55 am	Advancing farmed fish welfare in Africa: Lessons learned from Egypt and Kenya- Wasseem Emam - Director, Ethical Seafood Research
11.55-12.15 pm	Environmental Sustainability and Animal Welfare: Synergies and Challenges – Dr. Elynn Njeri – AU-IBAR
12.15-1.00 pm	Discussion
1.00-2.00 p.m.	Lunch

SESSION 8: Panel Discussion

Panel moderator: **Michael O'Brien Onyeka**; Executive Vice President, Nature for Justice

2.00-3.00 p.m.

Keynote: Understanding Animal Sentience: Science, Ethics and Policy – **Dr Mwenda Mbaka**

Panel speakers:

Jim Karani, General Counsel at Lawyers for Animal Protection in Africa (LAPA), **Yolanda Eisenstein**, Animal Law Commission, **Alexis Olds** – Compassion in World Farming, Southern Africa (TBC); **Dr Raphael Kinoti**, CEO-Brooke EA.

SESSION 9: Conclusion and Way Forward

3.00-4.00 pm

3.00-3.30 pm

Implementation status on UNEA's Animal Welfare, Environment and Sustainable Development Nexus Resolution, **Abdelkader Bensada**, UNEP

3.30-3.45 pm

Conference Resolutions, **Wachira Kariuki** and **Dr Dennis Bahati**

3.45-4.00 pm

Way forward for the Conference

4.00-4.10 p.m.

Vote of Thanks: **Josphat Ngonyo**, Conference Patron

4.10-4.30 pm

Closing Ceremony:
Presided over by **Dr Allan Azegele**, Director of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development Republic of Kenya

4.30-5.00 pm

Tea/Coffee

*******END OF CONFERENCE*******

ANNEX II – LIST OF ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

NAME	ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY
Josphat Ngonyo - ANAW Executive Director and Conference Patron	Secretariat	Kenya
Josiah Meshack Ojwang - Conference Director	Secretariat	Kenya
Tennyson Jonathan Williams	Conference Chairperson World Animal Protection	Kenya
Ulf Björnholm	UNEP	Kenya
Isaiah Otieno	UNEP	Kenya
Hiver Boussini	AU-IBAR	Burkina Faso
Dr Patrick Muinde	World Animal Protection	Kenya
Dr Solomon Onyango	The Donkey Sanctuary	Kenya
Dr Mwenda Mbaka	AU-IBAR	Kenya
Otieno Mtula	The Donkey Sanctuary	Kenya
Florence Makau	The Donkey Sanctuary	Kenya
Samuel Theuri	Brooke East Africa	Kenya
David Nyoagbe	Ghana Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (GSPCA)	Ghana
Amal El Bekri	RAPAD MAROC	Morocco
Dr Thomas Kahema	Tanzania Animal Welfare Society (TAWESO)	Tanzania
Dr Bojia Duguma	The Donkey Sanctuary, Ethiopia	Ethiopia
Anne-Marie Dzinoreva	International Association for Students in Agriculture and Related Sciences (IAAS)	Zimbabwe
Moira Felgate	MAPS - Mozambique Animal Protection Society	Mozambique
Jean Claude Masengesho	Rwanda Animal Welfare Organization (RAWO)	Rwanda
Tom Sandi	Campaign against Cruelty to Animals	Sierra Leone
Bantu Lukambo	IDPE	DRC
Catherine Chumo	Secretariat	Kenya
Wachira Kariuki	Secretariat	Kenya
Sebastian Mwanza	Secretariat	Kenya
Duncan Muthiani	Secretariat	Kenya
Dennis Bahati	Secretariat	Kenya
Angela Langat	Secretariat	Kenya
Maureen Magalasia	Secretariat	Kenya
Eunice Robai	Secretariat	Kenya
Elynn Njeri	Secretariat	Kenya
Polycap Ondieki	Secretariat	Kenya
Sharon Koru	Secretariat	Kenya
Cedella Shikuku	Secretariat	Kenya
Annastacia Kuria	Secretariat	Kenya
Brenda Okumu	Secretariat	Kenya
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