

## **THE 10TH AFRICA ANIMAL WELFARE CONFERENCE-2026**

**THEME: Dialogue to Action-Collaborative Implementation for Animal Welfare, Climate Adaptation and Sustainable Development in Africa**

**PROPOSED DATE: 5-7 October, 2026**

**VENUE: Golden Peacock Hotel, Lusaka, Zambia**

### **Introduction and background**

[The Africa Animal Welfare Conference \(AAWC\)](#) has, since its inception in Nairobi in 2017, evolved into a premier Pan-African-led platform for advancing animal welfare within the broader sustainable development agenda. Over nine editions, the conference has convened policymakers, researchers, development partners, academia, civil society, and practitioners to strengthen policy dialogue, promote cross-sector collaboration, and elevate animal welfare as an essential component of environmental sustainability and human well-being.

From the inaugural conference held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2017 through to the 9th Conference convened in Yaoundé, Cameroon, in 2025, the Africa Animal Welfare Conference has consistently identified and advanced critical priorities shaping the continent's animal welfare agenda. Across these editions, key commitments and areas of action have been recorded, including;

1. Recognition of the interconnectedness of animals, people, and the environment, and commitment to mainstream animal welfare into Africa's sustainable development agenda.
2. Affirmation that animal welfare is not a peripheral issue, but integral to climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, public health, and sustainable livelihoods.
3. Commitment to strengthening and harmonizing animal welfare legislation and enforcement mechanisms across AU Member States.
4. Call for full domestication, funding, and implementation of the Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa (AWSA) within national development, agricultural, trade, and environmental policies.
5. Promotion of sustainable production and consumption systems that safeguard animal welfare and environmental integrity.
6. Integration of animal welfare into disaster preparedness and humanitarian response frameworks, particularly for animals affected by climate-related crises.
7. Advancement of One Health approaches linking animal health, human health, and ecosystem health,

including contributions to global processes such as the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and pandemic preparedness frameworks.

8. Strengthening cross-border and regional cooperation, including mutual legal assistance, joint investigations, and collaboration through Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

9. Recognition of the need to address emerging threats, including illegal wildlife trade and unsustainable exploitation of animals, with particular emphasis on donkey slaughter and the skin trade, and support for continental preservation strategies.

10. Encouragement of partnerships between governments, civil society, academia, research institutions, and the private sector to drive coordinated implementation.

11. Elevation of youth engagement, women's leadership, and indigenous knowledge systems as critical enablers of sustainable animal welfare governance.

12. Commitment to reforming food systems toward ethical, sustainable, and climate-smart agriculture that incorporates animal welfare standards.

13. Alignment of animal welfare actions with Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), and other continental policy frameworks.

14. Transition from dialogue and policy recognition (2017–2024) toward measurable, action oriented implementation, accountability, and institutional integration (2025 onward).

### **Focus of the 10th AAWC**

The 10th edition marks a defining milestone. Building on nearly a decade of commitments and policy progress, the 10th AAWC marks a decisive shift from dialogue to coordinated implementation. With the foundations firmly established, the focus now turns to measurable action, strengthened accountability, and deeper integration of animal welfare within Africa's climate and sustainable development agenda.

As Africa confronts escalating climate change impacts, biodiversity loss, illegal wildlife trade, unsustainable livestock systems, and increasing socio-economic vulnerabilities, the urgency shifts from dialogue alone to measurable implementation. The 10th AAWC presents a space to translate important resolutions and frameworks that have been adopted over the past decade, into tangible outcomes at regional, national and community levels. Co-hosted by African Union InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources, Working Animals International, Africa Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW), and hosted by the Government of Zambia, the 10th AAWC reinforces its identity as an African-owned platform committed to coordinated implementation, accountability, and policy coherence across Member States.

This year's conference is planned to take place at **Golden Peacock Hotel, Lusaka, Zambia, from 5th to 7th October, 2026**. It will be a hybrid event comprising in-person attendance and live streaming for online participants. The proceedings will involve presentations on selected topics, speeches, panel discussions, and question-and-answer sessions.

### **Theme rationale**

The theme of the 10th AAWC is **“Dialogue to Action: Collaborative Implementation for Animal Welfare, Climate Adaptation and Sustainable Development in Africa.”** This theme aligns with global frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the African Union's Agenda 2063, all of which reinforces Africa's commitment to sustainable production, biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and inclusive development through strengthened governance. The theme reflects the maturity of the AAWC platform and the continent's evolving priorities. After nearly a decade of strategic deliberations, the conference now transitions decisively toward action-oriented collaboration.

Africa's ecosystems support globally significant biodiversity and sustain millions of livelihoods through pastoralism, agriculture, and wildlife economies (African Union, 2015; IPBES, 2019). However, climate variability, habitat degradation, and unsustainable production practices increasingly threaten these systems. Recognizing the interconnectedness of animal health, human well-being, and environmental integrity, the conference advances a One Health and One Welfare approach, consistent with the Quadripartite One Health Joint Plan of Action (FAO, UNEP, WHO & WOA, 2022) and emerging global scholarship linking animal welfare to sustainable development outcomes. By emphasizing collaborative implementation, monitoring, and accountability, the 10th AAWC aligns with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals, positioning Africa not merely as a participant in global discourse but as a leader shaping context driven solutions at the animal welfare–climate–development nexus.

### **Conference objectives**

1. To catalyze coordinated implementation across sectors and governance levels in enhancing animal welfare, climate resilience and sustainable development.
2. To promote policy harmonization by integrating animal welfare considerations into climate adaptation strategies, conservation frameworks, livestock development policies, and disaster risk reduction plans.
3. To strengthen legal and institutional systems, including enhancing enforcement capacity, judicial cooperation, and cross-border collaboration to address cruelty, illegal wildlife trade, and unsustainable exploitation.
4. To mobilize partnerships and sustainable financing mechanisms that support implementation efforts. Recognizing Africa's demographic strength, the conference will emphasize youth engagement, volunteerism, and community stewardship as essential drivers of grassroots transformation.

5. Showcase academic and scientific discourse on Africa's path towards climate resilience and sustainable development.

### **Sub-themes**

1. **Climate Resilience, Conservation, and Sustainable Animal Systems**-explore integrated approaches that link animal welfare with climate adaptation and biodiversity protection.

2. **Youth, Volunteerism, and Community Stewardship**-recognizes that implementation ultimately occurs at the grassroots level. This track will showcase models of community-led action, youth-driven innovation, and inclusive participation of women and indigenous communities in advancing animal welfare and conservation outcomes.

3. **Strengthening Legal and Institutional Frameworks**-will address legislative reform, inter agency coordination, judicial collaboration, and cross-border enforcement mechanisms. It will examine opportunities for harmonizing standards and enhancing regulatory systems to combat illegal wildlife trade and other forms of animal exploitation.

4. **Integrating Animal Welfare into Policy, Finance, and One Health Systems**-embedding animal welfare within national development planning, climate and agricultural policies, public finance frameworks, and One Health systems. It will examine policy coherence, inter ministerial coordination, and resource mobilization mechanisms needed to ensure sustained and accountable implementation across sectors.

5. **Ecosystem Conservation and Wildlife Protection** – explore Africa's commitment towards ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection emphasizing on wildlife legislation reforms, community conservation, human-wildlife coexistence, intelligence-led enforcement and artificial intelligence in wildlife protection.

### **Expected outcomes**

1. Renewed commitments integrating animal welfare into climate and biodiversity frameworks.

2. Strengthened AU-coordinated collaboration platforms.

3. A 10-Year Reflection and action report outlining lessons learned and forward strategy.

4. Strengthened alignment with continental and global frameworks such as the African Union Agenda 2063, Sustainable Development Goals and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

5. Clear policy recommendations for governments to strengthen climate adaptation action plans, sustainable production systems, ecosystem restoration, wildlife protection laws and enforcement mechanisms.



6. New or strengthened partnerships among governments, civil society, research institutions, private sector, and local communities towards sustainable development in Africa.

7. Conference report.

### **Conference organization and participation**

The 10th Africa Animal Welfare Conference will be co-hosted by African Union Inter-african Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), Africa Network for Animal Welfare, (ANAW), Working Animals International and the Government of Zambia. It will convene representatives from AU Member States, regional economic communities, academia, civil society organizations, conservation agencies, youth networks, and development partners. Building on the strong participation of previous editions, the 10th Conference is expected to attract expanded engagement, reflecting the growing recognition of animal welfare as a cross-cutting priority within Africa's sustainable development agenda.