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MEETING DOCUMENT

From:	Presidency
To:	Working Party on Animals and Veterinary Questions (Animal Welfare)
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Subject:	Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1255/97 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 - Annex II

In preparation of the Working Party on Animals and Veterinary Questions (Animal Welfare) of 17-18 February 2026, delegations will find in annex Annex II of the above Regulation as revised by the Presidency on the basis of delegations' comments. The text will be included in a revised compilation of Annexes of that Regulation, together with Presidency suggestions to Chapters II, III, IV and VI of its Annex I.

ANNEX II¹

SPECIFIC CONDITIONS FOR THE TRANSPORT OF AQUATIC ANIMALS

As referred to in Articles 2, 12a, 17 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 33, 36a, 44 and 47

CHAPTER I

FITNESS FOR TRANSPORT

- 1. The ability of the aquatic animals to cope with the stress of transport shall be assessed based on their species, age, size, health status, previous handling, and recent exposure to stressors.**
- 2. Aquatic animals shall not be considered fit for transport in particular if they:**
 - (a) show clinical signs of disease;**
 - (b) present an infestation of parasites if it is likely to cause pain, suffering, or decline in health during transport;**
 - (c) have injuries, including haemorrhaging, and deep lesions exposing muscle, or are severely emaciated;**
 - (d) show abnormal behaviour or appear moribund and are unable to move independently, with the exception of aquatic animals that are sedated or in a state of induced torpor due to low temperature;**
 - (e) have not been fasted prior to transport for gut clearance in accordance with species-specific requirements;**
 - (f) have been recently exposed to stressors that adversely affect behaviour or physiological state such as extreme temperatures or chemical agents.**

¹ **Movements of aquatic animals by a tow boat and transport of eggs, embryos and larvae of aquatic animals are suggested to be excluded from the scope of this Regulation.**

(g) in the case of fish, show clinical signs such as:

(i) excessive scale loss affecting skin integrity;

(ii) severe eye lesions;

(iii) damage to or severe discoloration of the gills, skin or fins;

(iv) loss of equilibrium or swim bladder disorders;

(v) excessive mucus secretion.

CHAPTER II

MEANS OF TRANSPORT AND CONTAINERS FOR AQUATIC ANIMALS

1. **Design and maintenance of means of transport ~~road vehicles~~ and containers for aquatic animals²**
 - 1.1. **~~Road vehicles~~ Means of transport and containers used for transport of aquatic animals including their fittings shall be appropriate to the species, age, size, weight and number of aquatic animals to be transported.**
 - 1.2. **~~Road vehicles~~ Means of transport and containers for aquatic animals including their fittings shall be maintained in good mechanical and structural condition to prevent damages of the vehicle that may directly or indirectly affect the welfare of transported aquatic animals designed, constructed, maintained and operated so as to:**
 - (a) avoid injury of the aquatic animals;**
 - (b) protect the aquatic animals from extreme temperatures;**
 - (c) prevent the aquatic animals escaping or falling out;**
 - (d) minimise noise and vibrations that may negatively affect the welfare of the aquatic animals;**
 - (e) be easily cleaned and disinfected.**

- 1.3. ~~Road vehicles~~ Means of transport and containers **for aquatic animals including their fittings** shall ensure adequate circulation of water and equipment for oxygenation as required to meet variations in the conditions during the journey and the needs of the **aquatic** animals being transported, ~~including the closing of valves in well boats for biosecurity reasons.~~
- 1.4 ~~The aquatic animals shall be accessible to inspection during the journey in order to ensure that their welfare can be assessed.³~~
- 1.5. ~~Road vehicles~~ Means of transport and containers **for aquatic animals including their fittings** shall **be designed, constructed, maintained and operated so as to** allow for:
- (a) inspection checking the condition of the consignment; and**
 - (b) when aquatic animals are transported in water, monitoring of the relevant water parameters set out in point 3.2 of Chapter III, and**
 - (c) and take taking** corrective measures when necessary.

CHAPTER III

TRANSPORT PRACTICES

21. Handling

- 21.1. Aquatic animals shall **be handled gently and according to their species, age and size and they shall** not be lifted by their gills **or any appendages such as fins, legs, antennae or claws.**
- 21.2. The handling equipment shall be **suitable for the species, age and size of the aquatic animals being transported and shall be** designed, constructed, and maintained **and operated so as** to ~~minimise physical~~ **avoid** injuries **and unnecessary stress.**
- 1.3. For aquatic animals transported in water, the duration of any handling outside the water shall be as short as possible.**

³ **Covered by point 1.5 of this Chapter.**

2. Loading practices

2.1. Prior to loading, the following shall be assessed:

- (a) crowding procedure;
- (b) construction or operation of equipment to be used for loading;
- (c) the need for acclimatisation of aquatic animals;
- (d) homogeneity of the size of the aquatic animals being transported to prevent aggressive behaviour.

If the assessment of points (a) to (d) reveals conditions that may negatively affect the welfare of the aquatic animals to be transported, corrective measures shall be taken before loading.

2.2. During loading, measures shall be taken to avoid any injury and unnecessary stress to the aquatic animals.

2.3. The density of aquatic animals in a means of transport and/or container for aquatic animals shall be maintained within limits which meet the specific needs related to the species, age, and size of the aquatic animals being transported. The duration of the journey or journeys shall be taken into account. For aquatic animals being transported in water, every aquatic animal shall be able to change its position freely.

2.4. The containers shall be secured before the start of the journey to prevent their displacement during the transport.

3. Water for aquatic animals transported in water

3.1. ~~Operators shall ensure~~ The water quality that is and quantity during the journey shall be appropriate for the species, age and size of the aquatic animals being transported and ~~method of transportation.~~

3.2. ~~Operators shall ensure~~ The monitoring and maintenance of at least the following water parameters and their maintenance during the journey within the limits meeting according to the species- specific needs related to the species, age, and size of the aquatic animals being transported, shall be ensured ~~during the whole journey:~~

- (a) Oxygen concentration and saturation;
- ~~(b) Carbon dioxide;~~
- ~~(c) Ammonia level;~~

- (d) Temperature;
- (e) pH;
- (f) In case of transport in saline water, salinity.

3.3. The monitoring referred to in point 3.2 shall be carried out at least:

- (i) at the place of departure;
- (ii) in the case of road transport, whenever the driver is required to take a rest or a break in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 561/2006, or, in case of vehicles falling outside the scope of that Regulation, every 4,5 hours from the departure of the vehicle;
- (iii) whenever the vehicle stops for the purpose of replacing the water;⁴
- (iv) in the case of transport by well-boats, every 4,5 hours; and
- (v) at the place of destination.

3.4. For long journeys the values monitored in accordance with point 3.2 shall be recorded in the journey log.

3.5. Where the monitoring in accordance with point 3.2 shows values that are outside limits meeting the specific needs related to the species, age, and size of the aquatic animals being transported, corrective actions shall be implemented.⁵

3.6. By way of derogation from point 3, in case aquatic animals are transported in bags, point 5 applies.

4. ~~Fitness for transport~~

~~4.1. The ability of the aquatic animals to cope with the stress of transport shall be assessed based on health status, previous handling, and recent transport history.~~

~~4.2. The main reasons for considering aquatic animals as not fit for transport are:~~

- ~~(a) displaying clinical signs of disease;~~
- ~~(b) significant physical injuries or abnormal behaviour;~~

⁴ **The following new point is proposed to be added in Annex Va as point 1 e): “In case of transport of aquatic animals on long journeys by road include locations for replacing the water if needed”.**

⁵ **Elements included in points 3.3 – 3.5. could be placed in an appropriate article of Chapter 5 (Obligation during transport) instead.**

~~(e) recent exposure to stressors that adversely affect behaviour or physiological state (for example extreme temperatures, chemical agents);~~

~~(d) insufficient or excessive length of fasting.~~

~~5. Loading practices~~

~~5.1. Operators shall take the necessary measures to avoid any injury and unnecessary stress to aquatic animals during loading.~~

~~5.2. At loading, the following shall be assessed:~~

~~(a) crowding procedure prior to loading;~~

~~(b) inappropriately constructed or operated equipment;~~

~~(c) significant changes in the water quality such as different temperature or other water parameters.~~

~~5.3. Operators shall ensure the density of aquatic animals in a vehicle and/or container is maintained within the appropriate limits taking into account the species-specific needs and the scientific data available.~~

~~5.4. Loading shall be carried out by operators with knowledge and experience of the behaviour and other characteristics of the aquatic animals with the aim to ensure their welfare.⁶~~

~~6. During transport~~

~~6.1. Periodic inspections should take place during the transport to verify that acceptable welfare is being maintained.⁷~~

~~6.2. Drivers or attendants shall monitor the water quality and make the necessary adjustments to ensure the parameters enumerated in point 3.2 are maintained within the appropriate limits taking into account the species-specific needs.⁸~~

~~6.3. Drivers shall travel in a manner that minimises uncontrolled movements of the aquatic animals that may lead to stress and cause injury.⁹~~

⁶ Deleted as training requirements are now covered by Article 36a.

⁷ This point is proposed to be deleted as it is covered by paragraph 1 of article 19 for transport by road and rail, the new proposed point (f) of paragraph 4a of article 19 for transport by road or rail, for which a leg of the journey includes transport by a roll-on-roll-off vessel and the new proposed amendment of point (aa) of paragraph 3 of article 21 for transport by well-boat.

⁸ This point is proposed to be deleted as it is covered by points 3.1. to 3.5.

⁹ This sentence is proposed to be deleted as it is covered by paragraph 2a of article 19.

- 6.4. In the event of health emergency during transport, the driver or an attendant shall initiate the contingency plan.¹⁰
- 6.5. ~~If the killing of aquatic animals is necessary during the transport, the driver or the attendant or the animal welfare officer shall be trained and capable to perform the killing with prior stunning so that animals remain unconscious until death.~~¹¹
- 7.4. Unloading practices**
- 7.4.1. ~~The principles of good handling during loading apply equally during unloading.~~ **During unloading, measures shall be taken to avoid any injury and unnecessary stress to the aquatic animals.**
- 7.4.2. ~~Operators shall unload the~~ **The aquatic animals shall be unloaded without undue delay** as soon as possible after arrival at the destination allowing sufficient time to avoid causing any harm to the animals.
- 7.4.3. ~~Operators shall consider enough time~~ **Measures shall be taken** for acclimatisation of **aquatic animals** some species depending on their needs and before being unloaded **prior to unloading** into water of a significantly different quality (such as temperature, salinity **or** pH).
- 7.4.4. ~~Operators shall remove~~ **At the place of destination,** moribund or seriously injured **and dead** aquatic animals ~~and kill them~~ **shall be removed and killed as soon as possible,** using an appropriate method suitable for the species and size of the animals and preventing unnecessary suffering.

¹⁰ **This point is proposed to be deleted as it is covered by paragraph 2 of article 19 as amended for the attendants and the new amendment of point (b) of paragraph 3 of article 21 for the animal welfare officers.**

¹¹ **This point is proposed to be deleted due to feasibility constraints for the killing of aquatic animals during transport.**

5. Transport of aquatic animals in bags

- 5.1. Where aquatic animals are transported in bags, the bags shall be designed, filled and handled in such a way as to maintain appropriate water quality throughout the journey, taking into account the species being transported, the stocking density and the duration of transport.**
- 5.2. The material of the bags shall be of sufficient thickness to withstand the weight of the water and aquatic animals, internal pressure changes and, for species with spines or sharp protrusions, shall be puncture-resistant.**
- 5.3. Bags shall be properly sealed, protected from damage and secured during transport so as to prevent leakage, excessive movement or exposure to adverse environmental conditions.**
- 5.4. The water level shall be sufficient for all aquatic animals to be completely immersed and be able to move when the bag is in its transport position.**
- 5.5. The bags shall be placed upright in a rigid, water resistant container that provides thermal insulation and maintains darkness.**
- 5.6. The outer container in which the bags are transported shall be clearly and visibly marked, indicating the presence of live animals and with a sign indicating the top of the container.**

6. Transport of aquatic animals out of water

- 6.1. Aquatic animals shall only be transported out of water where:**
- (a) the species is physiologically adapted to withstand temporary air exposure;**
 - (b) the duration of transport is kept as short as possible;**
 - (c) conditions during transport meet the the specific needs related to the age, size and species of the aquatic animals being transported.**
- 6.2. Where ice or coolants are used, they shall be separated from the aquatic animals by a physical barrier so as to prevent thermal shock or freezing injuries resulting from direct contact.**

8. — Post transport practices

- 8.1. — ~~The operator in charge of receiving the aquatic animals shall closely observe them during the post-transport period and keep appropriate records.¹²~~
- 8.2. — ~~Aquatic animals showing abnormal clinical signs shall either be isolated and examined by a veterinarian, who may recommend treatment, or killed using a method suitable for the species and size of the animal and preventing unnecessary suffering.¹³~~
- 8.3. — ~~Operators shall evaluate significant problems associated with transport and take mitigation measures to prevent recurrence.¹⁴~~

¹² **Observation at arrival will be covered by Articles 25 and 26, once the Commission uses the empowerment in the last sub-paragraph of Article 26(1).**

¹³ **Proposed to be deleted since it is now covered by the amended second sub-paragraph of article 25(0).**

¹⁴ **Once the Commission uses the empowerment in the last sub-paragraph of Article 26(1), this will be covered by requirement for organisers and transporters to document measures they put in place, in case indicators measured at arrival indicate important negative animal welfare consequences (see article 6(3)(c) for organisers and article 9(3)(b) for transporters).**