

## Høring - NOU 2014:15 Norsk pelsdyrhold

Eurogroup for Animals is the pan-European animal advocacy organization, recognized by the European Parliament and the European Commission as the leading animal welfare organisation at EU level. The Fur Free Alliance is an international coalition working to inform consumers and to advance legislation with the goal of ending the deprivation and cruelty suffered by fur bearing animals.

Together we represent 72 animal protection organizations in Europe and worldwide. Among our members are the Norwegian organizations Dyreveralliansen and NOAH.

We have been closely following the debate in Norway after the report from the committee on fur farming last December. Norway is known for a high standard of animal welfare. We are very pleased to notice that the current government is seriously considering the future of the Norwegian fur industry.

**As Eurogroup for Animals and Fur Free Alliance, we urge you to follow the committee minority's advice to ban fur farming of mink and foxes in Norway on the basis of newer development on animal ethics and animal behaviour.**

We would also like to present three important remarks on why such a decision should be advocated:

**1. The fur industry is ignoring formal recommendations.** The improvements recommended already in 2001 by the European Commission's Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare (SCAHAW) have still not taken place in fur farms. One of the recommendations of the Scientific Committee was that *'Since current husbandry systems cause serious problems for all species of animals reared for fur, efforts should be made for all species to design housing systems which fulfil the needs of the animals'*.<sup>1</sup>

**2. Other European countries are banning or reducing fur production.** Several countries in Europe have concluded that the current fur farming practice severely affects with the welfare of the animals. In Belgium, the region of Wallonia has banned fur farming as of January this year. The region of Brussels has started a similar process because of the cruelty inherent to the practice.

The UK and Northern Ireland banned fur farming over a decade ago. Other European countries that have banned fur farming are Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The

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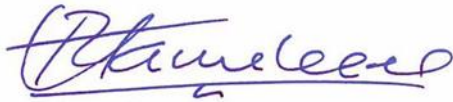
<sup>1</sup> European Commission (2001): The welfare of animals kept for fur production. Report of the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare. Adopted on 12-13 December 2001

Netherlands, Republic of Macedonia and Slovenia. Denmark, Germany, Switzerland and Sweden have adopted stricter animal welfare regulations, which in practice have limited fur farming.

**3. The voice of the citizens must be heard.** Eurogroup for Animals represents animal welfare interests on many EU advisory committees and consultation bodies, and we often bear witness to national and international governments not sufficiently recognizing the views of the citizens.

As you may be aware, a recent 2014 poll (Infact/Dyrevernalliansen) shows that 68 % of Norwegians believe that fur farming is wrong. The Norwegian government now has a unique chance to take the lead on animal welfare by phasing out fur farming.

Such a decision would be in line with scientific research on the needs of mink and fox, as well as with the views of the Norwegian citizens.



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