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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	EU Platform on animal welfare - <i>Information from the Commission on the state of play</i>

Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Commission on the above mentioned subject to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council ("Agriculture and Fisheries") on 6 March 2017.

EU Platform on animal welfare

The Commission held a first stakeholders' dialogue on animal welfare in **February 2016** with Member States and the main stakeholders. There was a broad consensus that an enhanced stakeholder dialogue will bring added value at EU level. Based on this wide support, the Commission has actively worked towards the establishment of the Platform.

On **24 January 2017** the Commission adopted a Decision to establish the EU Platform on animal welfare¹. The Platform will bring together relevant stakeholders and public entities in order to promote Union standards on animal welfare, encourage dialogue between them as well as share best practices, scientific knowledge and policy developments in this field.

The Platform will be composed of 75 members: 35 public entities – 28 Member States, three EEA² members, three international organisations (World Organisation for Animal Health, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation and World Bank) and the European Food Safety Authority – as well as 40 members from business organisations, civil society, and independent scientific experts. Furthermore, a maximum of five observers may attend the meetings of the Platform.

For the selection of the 40 members, the Commission published a call for applications³ on **30 January**. Interested organisations and experts have been invited to apply by 6 March 2017. Based on the criteria of the call, a selection committee will propose to the Director-General of the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety the appointment of these members in compliance with the Commission's horizontal rules on expert groups⁴ and Article 5 of the Decision setting up the Platform.

¹ Commission Decision of 24.01.2017 establishing the Commission Expert Group 'Platform on Animal Welfare', OJ C 31, 31.1.2017, p. 61

² European Economic Area (Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein)

³ http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=news.calls_for_app

⁴ Commission Decision of 30.05.2016 establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert groups, C(2016) 3301

The first meeting of the Platform will be held in Brussels on **6 June** and the second is foreseen in November 2017 (meetings are foreseen at least twice a year at the premises of the Commission).

At its first meeting, the Platform will adopt its rules of procedure by simple majority of its members. The Commission will also present its working priorities on animal welfare with a view to identifying how the Platform members may contribute to them and possibly complement the Commission activities in this field. The Commission currently focuses its activities on better implementation of the EU animal welfare legislation, the promotion of EU standards internationally and the development of market value of animal welfare both within and outside the EU. Within this framework, the Commission will invite the Platform members to discuss, share experiences and identify topics and methods where they can concretely contribute to achieve measurable and realistic objectives. Based on the level of consensus obtained among the members as well as their commitments, the Commission will define a working programme of the Platform.

In addition, the Commission may set up subgroups for the purpose of examining specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the Commission.