



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT
Directorate D - Water, Chemicals & Cohesion
ENV.D.1 - Chemicals

Brussels, 28 -09- 2007

Subject: Response to petitions on the revision of Directive 86/609/EEC on the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes and on banning experiments on non-human primates

Dear European Union citizen,

We have received an overwhelming number of letters from EU citizens concerning the ongoing revision of Directive 86/609/EEC on the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes, as well as specifically on the subject of non-human primates used in experimentation.

All animal experiments in the EU, including those using non-human primates, must comply with the provisions of Directive 86/609/EEC. The aim of the revision of this Directive is to strengthen the legislation in the area of animal experimentation in the EU and to ensure that the animals still used in experiments receive appropriate care and humane treatment. In particular, the revision will be looking into the requirements and conditions for the authorisation of experiments, personnel and establishments, and inspections of establishments which breed, supply or use laboratory animals.

We share citizens' concern on the use of non-human primates in experiments, which is one of the most sensitive topics in relation to animal research. Specific questions on the use of non-human primates including the possible banning of certain species, such as great apes, are part of an ongoing discussion on non-human primates and experimentation.

In addition to areas described above, the revision process is also looking into aspects such as the accommodation and care and the origins of animals used in experiments, both of which are of high relevance as regards non-human primates. Finally, ethical evaluation, allowing for a case-by-case examination of proposed research projects, in accordance with the SSC recommendation¹, could form one of the corner stones of the revision.

¹ The Scientific Steering Committee: "The need for non-human primates in biomedical research", statement adopted 4-5 April 2002. The document is available on the Internet: http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/sc/ssc/out253_en.pdf.

We would like to thank everyone who has contacted us in recent months for their interest in this important topic. The progress on the revision of Directive 86/609/EEC can be followed on this website.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/home_en.htm.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Grant Lawrence". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

D. Grant LAWRENCE
Acting Head of Unit