NOTE

from: Swedish delegation

to: Council

Subject: Commission's report on the protection of animals during transport
- Information from the Swedish delegation

Delegations will find attached a note submitted by the Swedish delegation, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 17 May 2011.
Commission's report on the protection of animals during transport – Information from the Swedish delegation

The welfare of animals during transport is a major animal-protection issue of great concern to the public. This is demonstrated by the various initiatives taken at regular intervals by animal-protection organisations. Most recently, the animal-protection organisation Animals' Angels launched an international campaign to abolish the long-distance transport of animals.

For the Swedish Government, the transport of animals is a very important issue. Sweden is therefore looking forward to the report which the Commission has promised to draw up by September of this year\(^1\). Sweden hopes that the Commission will take this opportunity to improve the situation of animals and that the report will consequently be accompanied by legislative proposals concerning long journeys, in particular as regards restrictions on journey times. Resting periods and space allowances should also be reviewed.

Sweden considers that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Scientific Opinion (published on 1 January 2011) concerning the Welfare of Animals during Transport provides important material for the Commission's report and future action. The EFSA's conclusion that in the case of horses transported for slaughter the journey time should not exceed 12 hours is a step towards shortening journey times. And the conclusion that journey times for inter alia cattle need to be reviewed must be taken up.

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\(^1\) Commission report pursuant to Article 32 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport. According to that Article, within four years from the date mentioned in Article 37, second subparagraph (5 January 2007), the Commission is to present a report on the impact of the Regulation on inter alia the welfare of the animals being transported.
Sweden thinks however that there already exists sufficient scientific justification for going further and limiting transport of animals for slaughter to no more than eight hours, and that this must apply to all species of animals. It is also important that other forms of animal transport should be limited in time and considerably shorter, inter alia in the case of young unweaned animals. The transport of live animals should, wherever possible, be replaced by the transport of meat, embryos, sperm, eggs, etc. The space allowances for animals should also be reviewed in order to improve conditions for animals during transport.

Sweden would further stress that all EU Member States have a great responsibility regarding compliance with the legislation on protection of animals during transport. Sweden, like other Member States, must ensure that the authorities responsible adequately monitor animal transport and that measures with noticeable effects are taken whenever failures and deficiencies are discovered. That is what will enable us at this stage to improve animal protection during transport. Sweden does however think it would be advisable for EU legislation to be brought more in line with current knowledge concerning animal welfare during transport.