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- 6 December 2001 [shall come into force from 5 January 2002];
- 6 February 2003 [shall come into force from 6 March 2003];
- 8 July 2003 [shall come into force from 6 August 2003];
- 14 April 2005 [shall come into force from 19 May 2005];
- 19 December 2006 [shall come into force from 1 January 2007];
- 20 December 2007 [shall come into force from 18 January 2008];
- 17 September 2009 [shall come into force from 14 October 2009];
- 31 March 2010 [shall come into force from 4 May 2010];
- 16 December 2010 [shall come into force from 1 January 2011];
- 8 March 2012 [shall come into force from 15 April 2012];
- 12 June 2014 [shall come into force from 11 July 2014];
- 15 June 2017 [shall come into force from 13 July 2017].

If a whole or part of a section has been amended, the date of the amending law appears in square brackets at the end of the section. If a whole section, paragraph or clause has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets beside the deleted section, paragraph or clause.

The *Saeima*<sup>1</sup> has adopted and  
President has proclaimed the following law:

## **Animal Protection Law**

The ethical obligation of humankind is to ensure the welfare and protection of all species of animals, because every unique being is in itself of value. A human being has a moral obligation to honour any creature, to treat animals with empathic understanding and to protect them. Without a substantiated reason no one is permitted to kill an animal, to cause it pain, create suffering or to otherwise harm it.

### **Chapter I General Provisions**

#### **Section 1.**

The terms used in this Law are as follows:

- 1) **exhibition animal** – an animal which is kept for display to the public for public entertainment or education purpose, as well as a circus animal, except for an animal which is kept in a zoo;
- 2) **animal owner** – a legal or natural person who owns an animal;
- 3) **animal keeper** – a person in whose custody and care is an animal;
- 4) **animal shelter** – a specially equipped place for boarding of caught, alienated animals and animals in a helpless situation;
- 5) **animal boarding facility** – a specially equipped place where owners of pet animals may leave their animals to be cared for, for a specified period of time;
- 6) **euthanasia** – interruption of life functions of an animal in a painless way;
- 7) **experimental animal** – an animal bred for procedures or to be used therein;
- 8) **experimental animal breeder** – a person who breeds the animals referred to in Annex to this Law for the use in procedures or for the use of tissues or organs thereof for scientific purposes, or who breeds other animals mainly for such purposes, whether for profit or not;

<sup>1</sup> The Parliament of the Republic of Latvia

9) **experimental animal user** – a person who uses an animal in a procedure, whether for profit or not;

10) **experimental animal supplier** – a person, other than a breeder of the animal, supplying an experimental animal with a view to its use in procedures or for the use of its tissues or organs for scientific purposes, whether for profit or not;

11) **experimental project** – a programme of work having a defined scientific objective, and involving one or several procedures;

12) **welfare**– the totality of measures for ensuring the physiological and ethological needs of an animal;

13) **animal kept for farming purposes** – an animal that is bred and kept for the acquisition of products of animal origin or for other agricultural purposes, including an animal of wild species kept in an enclosed area and an animal obtained by the methods of genetic modifications;

14) **pet animal** – an animal which is kept by a human being for his or her pleasure;

15) **procedure** – invasive or non-invasive use of an animal for experimental or other scientific purpose, with known or unknown outcome, or for educational purposes which may cause the animal pain, suffering, discomfort or lasting harm equivalent to that caused by the introduction of a needle according to the veterinary medical practice, or exceeds it. This includes any actions which result or may result in the birth or hatching of an animal, or the creation or maintenance of a new genetically modified animal line in such circumstances, but this does not apply to the killing of animals for the sole purpose of using their organs or tissue;

16) **animal of wild species** – an animal the evolution of which has not been deliberately affected by a human in order to satisfy his or her needs;

17) **sport and work animal** – an animal that has acquired specific skills and performs action specified by a human;

18) **zoo** – a place where animals of wild species are kept for public display seven or more days per year for the purpose of conservation, reproduction or reintroduction of species, research and educating of the public.

*[8 March 2012; 12 June 2014; 15 June 2017]*

## **Section 2.**

This Law sets out the rights and obligations of a person within the scope of animal protection and welfare.

*[31 March 2010]*

## **Section 3.**

(1) Animals shall be classified according to their actual situation as follows:

- 1) wild animals;
- 2) animals bred in captivity.

(2) Wild animals shall be classified according to their method of use as follows:

- 1) game animals;
- 2) non-game animals.

(3) Animals bred in captivity shall be classified according to their method of use as follows:

- 1) farm animals;
- 2) pet animals;
- 3) sport, work and exhibition animals;
- 4) experimental animals;
- 5) animals kept in zoos;

6) animals of wild species kept in a registered place for the keeping of animals of wild species.  
[31 March 2010]

### **Section 3.<sup>1</sup>**

(1) It is prohibited to purchase, keep in captivity, alienate or keep for sale or exchange and offer for trade the following animals:

- 1) an animal of wild species of the order *Carnivora*;
- 2) a primate;
- 3) a sea mammal;
- 4) an animal of the order *Crocodylia*;
- 5) a snake type animal.

(2) It is prohibited to feed an animal with live warm-blooded animals.

(3) The prohibitions referred to in Paragraphs one and two of this Section shall not apply to zoos and registered places for the keeping of animals of wild species.

[31 March 2010]

### **Section 4.**

(1) Cruel treatment of animals is prohibited, that is:

- 1) the killing of an animal, except in the cases provided for in this Law;
- 2) the mutilating, tormenting and torturing of an animal;
- 3) leaving an animal without care;
- 4) leaving an animal in a helpless situation;
- 5) annoying and baiting an animal, except in the cases when it is necessary for the training of a work animal;
- 6) the organisation of animal fights, the involvement of animals in such fights and support of such fights;
- 7) subjection of an animal to modifying external appearance or other non-curative procedures, if the necessity thereof is not prescribed and they are not performed by a practising veterinarian or other person in accordance with the laws and regulations governing the welfare of animals. A practising veterinarian is allowed to perform tail docking for dog species specified in Section 18.<sup>1</sup> of this Law;
- 8) the use of an animal as a target for training in shooting or in competitions;
- 9) the use of animals for the training of animals of other species, except for the training of hunting dogs;
- 10) the use of an animal by making the animal to perform actions which are not characteristic to the relevant animal in natural environment and exceed natural capabilities thereof, as well as may harm the health of the animal or cause it suffering;
- 11) the showing of an animal of wild species outside a zoo or registered place for keeping of animals of wild species;
- 12) the offering and use of a female animal for the sexual satisfaction of a male animal without the intent of obtaining offspring;
- 13) the carrying out of other such actions which cause or may cause mutilation or death, or create suffering for an animal, except in cases when such actions have been carried out for treatment, experimental purposes or in cases when the life or health of a human being is being threatened;
- 14) non-observance of regulations for keeping of animals, welfare requirements and transportation regulations what endanger the health of the animal or may cause the death thereof;

15) non-observance of the requirements for the protection of animals intended for slaughter;

16) use of animals for religious rituals and lotteries.

(2) A person is prohibited from keeping an animal if he or she has been penalised for the cruel treatment of animals.

*[6 February 2003; 14 April 2005; 31 March 2010; 15 June 2017]*

#### **Section 4.<sup>1</sup>**

(1) Participation of a pet animal for which a surgery modifying its external appearance has been performed shall be prohibited in competitions, fairs and auctions, as well as showing in public exhibition, except for:

1) the animal for which the necessity of this surgical operation is attested by a practising veterinarian by making an entry in the passport or vaccination certificate of the animal;

2) the dog of a certain species specified in this Law for which tail docking is allowed;

3) the animal in the laws and regulations of the country of origin of which it is allowed to perform the relevant surgical operation modifying the external appearance.

(2) Without co-ordination with the Food and Veterinary Service, it is prohibited to use an animal in public events which are not specialised events with participation of the animal, or to give the animal as a gift in a public event without the consent of the person to whom the gift shall be given and without co-ordination with the Food and Veterinary Service.

*[31 March 2010]*

#### **Section 5.**

(1) An animal owner has the authority over an animal as specified in the Civil Law, except in the cases determined in this Law and other laws and regulations.

(2) An animal owner has the following obligations:

1) to take care of the health, welfare and use of an animal in accordance with its species, age and physiology;

2) to ensure that society has a favourable attitude towards the animal in the possession of the owner;

3) to ensure that the animal does not disturb or threaten human beings or other animals;

4) to not permit uncontrolled animal reproduction;

5) to ensure the compliance of animal keeping conditions, equipment, food and water with its physiological and ethological needs taking into account the species of the relevant animal, degree of development, adaptation and domestication;

6) to not subject an animal to pain and suffering, as well as to prevent the possibilities for injury thereof;

7) taking into account the physiological and ethological needs of an animal, to ensure physical activity for the animal, but for an animal with limited movement – sufficient area of keeping;

8) upon a request of the officials of the institutions referred to in Section 9 of this Law, in accordance with the competence thereof, to immediately demonstrate the animal, its place of keeping, as well as the animal's passport or vaccination certificate and other documents related to the animal;

9) to ensure marking of a sterilised cat, if the cat lives in a city or rural inhabited territory nearby dwelling houses.

(3) If the owner of an animal is unable to fulfil the obligations referred to in Paragraph two of this Section, the animal shall be alienated for a person who is able to fulfil these obligations,

transferred to an animal sanctuary or killed in accordance with the procedures determined in laws and regulations.

(4) An animal keeper, to whom an owner has entrusted an animal or in the possession of whom an animal has come in another way, also has the obligations referred to in Paragraph two of this Section.

(5) Only the owner of an animal has the right to give a permission to use the animal as a donor and – in the cases specified in this Law – for killing thereof, and also only the owner of an animal or his or her authorised person has the right to show an animal in public exhibitions.

*[31 March 2010]*

## **Section 5.<sup>1</sup>**

(1) A dog shall be recognised as dangerous by a commission for the assessment of a dog's behaviour established by the Food and Veterinary Service (hereinafter – the commission).

(2) If the process for the assessment of dog's behaviour has been commenced, the owner or keeper of the dog shall comply with the requirements laid down in the laws and regulations regarding keeping of a dangerous dog.

*[31 March 2010]*

## **Section 6.**

An animal owner shall ensure that an animal is registered and marked in accordance with the procedures specified in laws and regulations. A document attesting animal's identity – animal's passport or vaccination certificate where the animal identity number is entered – shall be issued and attested by a person authorised by the competent authority.

*[14 April 2005]*

## **Section 7.**

Assistance shall be given to an injured or a sick animal with the aid of a practising veterinarian when necessary.

## **Section 8.**

(1) An animal, which has been left homeless or without the care and supervision of an owner (except for a wild animal) shall be considered to be a stray animal. A sterilised cat living in a city and rural inhabited territory nearby dwelling houses shall not be considered as stray animal.

(2) Any person shall without delay inform the local government authority about a stray animal or an animal in a helpless situation.

(3) In accordance with the binding regulations of a local government and the laws and regulations governing the field of welfare of animals, the local government shall organise catching of stray animals and animals in a helpless situation and, if necessary, killing thereof.

(4) In accordance with the binding regulations of a local government, the local government may allow to keep a sterilised ownerless cat in a city or rural inhabited territory nearby dwelling houses, if the welfare and marking thereof is ensured.

(5) The Latvian Association of Veterinarians shall train the persons catching stray dogs and cats, issue and cancel the certificate of a person catching animals and register trained persons catching animals.

(6) Upon fulfilling the tasks of the State administration referred to in Paragraph five of this Section, including by issuing the relevant administrative acts, the Latvian Association of Veterinarians shall be under functional subordination of the Ministry of Agriculture.

(7) Contesting or appeal of the decision of the Latvian Association of Veterinarians taken for the fulfilment of the tasks referred to in Paragraph five of this Section shall not suspend their operation.

*[31 March 2010; 8 March 2012]*

## **Section 9.**

(1) Conformity with the requirements of this Law shall be supervised and controlled by:

1) the institutions subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture:

a) the Food and Veterinary Service – in relation to the protection and welfare of animals bred in captivity and protection of experimental animals, as well as to the control of the import, export and transit movement of animals on the State border control points specified in laws and regulations in accordance with their competence, but in relation to the welfare of pet animals – only in the objects of the State veterinary supervision and in the cases when there are suspicions or complaints regarding violations of laws and regulations;

b) the State Forestry Service – in relation to the protection of animals of wild species (game);

2) the institutions subordinated to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development – in relation to the protection of animals of wild species (non-game) living in the wild and to the protection of animals of wild species of special protection and of restricted use in accordance with laws and regulations of nature protection.

(2) The authorities referred to in Paragraph one of this Section may involve public animal protection organisations in conformity with the requirements of this Law.

(3) The Food and Veterinary Service shall supervise and control the execution of the legislation of the European Union to be applied directly in the field of animal welfare and protection, as well as provide the information requested by the European Union institutions.

(4) The Food and Veterinary Service shall be the competent authority regarding the protection of animals during transport and related operations in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97.

(5) The Food and Veterinary Service shall be the competent authority regarding animal health requirements in respect of the movement of circus animals in accordance with Commission Regulation (EC) No 1739/2005 of 21 October 2005 laying down animal health requirements for the movement of circus animals between Member States.

(6) Customs authorities of the State Revenue Service in accordance with the competence thereof shall ensure the supervision and control of the fulfilment of the requirements referred to in this Law in respect of the importation of skins of seal pups and products derived therefrom specified in Section 35.<sup>1</sup> of this Law.

(7) The Ministry of Agriculture may, in accordance with the procedures specified in the State Administration Structure Law, delegate the training in matters of the welfare of animals kept for farming purposes with the agreement to a body governed by private or public law which issues an administrative statement regarding such training. The administrative statements issued by a body governed by private or public law may be contested in the Food and Veterinary Service.

*[6 December 2001; 8 July 2003; 14 April 2005; 19 December 2006; 20 December 2007; 31 March 2010; 16 December 2010; 8 March 2012]*

## Section 10.

The Cabinet shall determine:

- 1) the procedures by which animals kept for farming purposes shall be kept and used, and shall determine the welfare requirements for the keeping and use of each species of animals kept for farming purposes, the requirements for the protection of animals kept for farming purposes which are intended for slaughter, as well as the rights and obligations of the keeper of animals kept for farming purposes;
- 2) the requirements for the keeping, trade and showing at public exhibitions of pet animals, dog training and the rights and duties of the owner and keeper of the pet animal;
- 3) the welfare requirements for the keeping, training and use of sport, work and exhibition animals in competitions, work or exhibitions;
- 4) in the field of protection of experimental animals:
  - a) the procedures for the registration of experimental animal breeders, suppliers and users and cancellation thereof;
  - b) the requirements for experimental animal breeders, suppliers and users;
  - c) the procedures for issuing a permit to the person responsible for an experimental project, and for cancelling it;
  - d) the procedures by which a permit for an experimental project shall be issued, amended, renewed and cancelled;
  - e) welfare requirements for the acquisition, marking, breeding, holding, rearing, supply and use of an experimental animal;
  - f) a list of such animals which are bred for use in procedures;
  - g) the procedures for evaluating experimental projects;
  - h) the requirements for premises, facilities, inventory, equipment;
  - i) the requirements for employees of breeders, suppliers and users;
  - j) the requirements for welfare structure and the tasks of the structure;
  - k) the methods for killing experimental animals;
  - l) the procedures by which documents shall be submitted for the receipt of a permit for an experimental project;
  - m) the requirements for the classification of severity of procedures;
  - n) the requirements for the repeat use of experimental animals in a procedure;
  - o) the procedures for registering, compiling of information and submitting reports, as well as storing documentation;
- 5) the procedures by which the renewal (reintroduction) of animal populations (reintroduction) shall occur in nature and the introduction of animals of wild species not characteristic to the nature of Latvia;
- 6) [6 December 2001];
- 7) the welfare requirements of animals in animal sanctuaries and animal boarding facilities, as well as animal veterinary medical care institutions;
- 8) the procedures for transporting animals, the welfare requirements for transporting animals in means of transport, as well as the procedures by which a permit of an animal carrier and a permit for means of transport for transporting animals shall be issued and registered;
- 9) [8 March 2012];
- 10) the procedures and requirements for keeping such wild animals in enclosed areas (deer parks, wild bird farms, fur animal farms and others), which are used for the acquisition of products of animal origin or for the purposes of species selection;
- 11) the criteria and procedures by which a dog shall be recognised as dangerous, determine further action with it and the requirements for keeping of a dangerous dog;
- 12) the procedures by which an animal shall be transferred to an animal sanctuary or animal boarding facility;

13) the amount and procedures for the payment of the State fee for the registration of the place for performances on tour of circus animal, training animal, circus and training performance;

14) the amount and procedures for the payment of the State fee for the registration of such dog which is trained to attack a human being;

15) [15 June 2017 / See Paragraph 18 of the Transitional Provisions];

16) the amount and procedures for the payment of the State fee for the issue of the certificate for the transportation of animals;

17) the amount and procedures for the payment of the State fee for the issue of a permit for a vehicle for transport of animals;

18) the amount and procedures for the payment of the State fee for the registration of the place for keeping of animals of wild species;

19) [8 March 2012];

20) the requirements for catching stray dogs and cats, the duties of a person catching animals, the training programme, the procedures for training and registration, the payment for training of a person catching animals and for the making and issuance of a certificate, as well as the procedures for issuing and cancelling a certificate of a person catching animals;

21) the requirements for keeping animals of wild species in a zoo and the requirements for the establishment and registration of a zoo;

22) the procedures for registering a place for the keeping of animals of wild species;

23) the procedures by which training in animal welfare issues shall be carried out, the training programme, the procedures by which a certification regarding training carried out shall be issued and cancelled, as well as the procedures for registering the trained persons;

24) the amount of the State fee and the procedures for making the payment to the person responsible for the issue of a permit for the recording operation of the experiment, the persons involved in the experiment and the experimental animals.

*[6 December 2001; 6 February 2003; 8 July 2003; 14 April 2005; 19 December 2006; 31 March 2010; 8 March 2012; 15 June 2017 / Amendment regarding deletion of Clause 15, and Clause 24 shall come into force on 1 January 2018. See Paragraphs 18 and 19 of the Transitional Provisions]*

## **Section 11.**

(1) The Animal Protection and Welfare Advisory Council shall be a consultative body that shall educate the general public and give recommendations to State administration institutions and local governments in the field of animal protection and welfare. In order to promote the public participation in solving issues related to animal protection and welfare, the composition of the council shall include representatives of the State administration institutions and scientific institutions, as well as of associations and foundations. In conformity with the principle of proportionality, the composition of the council shall include representatives from associations and foundations operating in the field of animal protection and welfare, as well as unite breeders of farm animals.

(2) The Cabinet shall approve the by-law of the Animal Protection and Welfare Advisory Council.

(3) The composition of the Animal Protection and Welfare Advisory Council shall be approved by the Minister for Agriculture.

*[12 June 2014]*

## **Section 12.**

(1) Persons shall be held liable for violations of this Law in accordance with the liability laid down in law.



(2) Holding persons administratively or criminally liable shall not release such persons from the obligation to compensate for losses caused as a result of violation of this Law.

(3) If an animal owner performs the actions referred to in Section 4 of this Law or allows such to occur, or does not perform the actions referred to in Paragraph two of Section 5, the institution officials referred to in Paragraph one of Section 9 may, within the scope of their competence, confiscate the animal in accordance with procedures laid down in law.

## **Chapter II**

### **Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes**

#### **Section 13.**

It is allowed to keep an animal of wild species in enclosed areas for the acquisition of products of animal origin or for other farming purposes in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations.

*[31 March 2010]*

#### **Section 14.**

If an animal for farming purposes is ill or injured, the owner or keeper of the animal shall immediately ensure the necessary care and invite a practising veterinarian for the provision of medical aid.

*[31 March 2010]*

#### **Section 15.**

*[31 March 2010]*

## **Chapter III**

### **Protection of Pet Animals**

#### **Section 16.**

*[31 March 2010]*

#### **17.pants.**

In regard to pet animals, it is prohibited:

- 1) to use them for haulage work (except for dogs in a special harness);
- 2) to breed and use them for the acquisition of food and furs.

*[15 June 2017]*

#### **Section 18.**

It is prohibited to perform surgical operations on pet animals, in order to modify their external appearance or for other non-curative purposes, except in cases when the operation has been prescribed by a practising veterinarian. A practising veterinarian is allowed to perform tail docking for the dog species specified in Section 18.<sup>1</sup> of this Law.

*[31 March 2010 / See Paragraph 9 of the Transitional Provisions]*

#### **Section 18.<sup>1</sup>**

A practising veterinarian shall be allowed to perform tail docking for the following dog species:

- 1) Wire Fox Terrier;
- 2) Smooth Fox Terrier;
- 3) Russian Spaniel;
- 4) German Wire-haired Pointing Dog;
- 5) German Short-haired Pointing Dog;
- 6) German Hunt Terrier;
- 7) Welsh Terrier.

*[31 March 2010 / This Section shall come into force on 6 July 2010. See Paragraph 9 of the Transitional Provisions]*

#### **Chapter IV** **Protection and Welfare of Sport, Work and Exhibition Animals** *[31 March 2010]*

##### **Section 19.**

An organizer of animal competitions shall, in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding the procedures for the organisation of animal competitions, fairs, auctions, exhibitions and other measures with participation of animals, inform the relevant territorial structural unit of the Food and Veterinary Service regarding the place and time of the competition.

*[31 March 2010]*

##### **Section 20.**

*[31 March 2010]*

##### **Section 21.**

It is prohibited to inject medical substances (doping) into an animal, which affect its natural capabilities.

*[31 March 2010]*

##### **Section 22.**

Sport, work or exhibition animals shall be selected in accordance with the type of use, conditions of use and carrying out of intended functions.

*[31 March 2010]*

##### **Section 23.**

A person may use a sport, work or exhibition animal if he or she knows and follows the keeping, training and use of the relevant species in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding welfare requirements for the keeping and training of sport, work and exhibition animals and use thereof in competitions, work or exhibitions.

*[15 June 2017]*

**Chapter V**  
**Protection of Experimental Animals**  
*[31 March 2010]*

**Section 23.<sup>1</sup>**

An experimental animal user shall, whenever possible, use a scientifically satisfactory method or a testing strategy which is not related to the use of live animals, instead of the procedure.

*[15 June 2017]*

**Section 23.<sup>2</sup>**

An experimental animal breeder, supplier and user shall improve the methods used in the animal breeding, keeping, rearing and procedures in order to eliminate or minimise any possible pain, suffering, discomfort or lasting harm to the animal.

*[15 June 2017]*

**Section 24.**

It is prohibited to use the following in the procedures:

1) animals, if there exists another scientific method or testing strategy, which is not related to the use of live animals;

2) live animals if another scientific method or testing strategy has been recognised in the European Union in the protection of animals used for scientific purposes, and unless laws and regulations regarding the protection of animals used for scientific purposes and prohibiting certain types of methods provide otherwise;

3) animals, which belong to endangered species, which is referred to in the Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora of 1973 and in Annex A of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 of 9 December 1996 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein;

4) animals taken from the wild;

5) non-human primates;

6) stray and pet animals.

*[8 March 2012; 15 June 2017]*

**Section 24.<sup>1</sup>**

The Food and Veterinary Service may, in accordance with the requirements stipulated by the Cabinet, allow the use of animals taken from the wild, non-human primates, and animals of endangered animal species in procedures.

*[8 March 2012 / This Section shall come into force on 1 January 2013. See Paragraph 15 of Transitional Provisions]*

**Section 24.<sup>2</sup>**

The Cabinet shall determine the procedures by which animals taken from the wild, non-human primates, and animals of endangered animal species shall be used in procedures.

*[8 March 2012]*

## **Section 25.**

It is allowed to use an experimental animal in procedures, if the purpose thereof is:

- 1) basic research;
- 2) translational or applied research with any of the following aims:
  - a) the avoidance, prevention, diagnosis or treatment of disease, ill-health or other abnormality or their effects in human beings, animals or plants,
  - b) the assessment, detection, regulation or modification of physiological conditions in human beings, animals or plants,
  - c) the welfare of animals and the improvement of the production conditions for animals reared for agricultural purposes;
- 3) the development, manufacture or testing of the quality, effectiveness and safety of medicinal products, foodstuffs, feed-stuffs and other substances or products for the purposes referred to in Clause 2 of this Section;
- 4) protection of the natural environment in the interests of the health or welfare of human beings or animals;
- 5) research aimed at preservation of animal species;
- 6) higher education, or training for the acquisition, maintenance or improvement vocational skills;
- 7) forensic inquiries.

*[8 March 2012; 15 June 2017]*

## **Section 26.**

Such procedure shall be selected for the use of an experimental animal for scientific, experimental or education purposes, in which:

- 1) the minimum number of animals is used;
- 2) experimental animals with the lowest capacity to experience pain, suffering, discomfort or lasting damage are involved;
- 3) the least possible pain, suffering, discomfort or lasting damage is caused to the experimental animal;
- 4) there is the highest possibility of ensuring satisfactory results.

*[8 March 2012]*

## **Section 26.<sup>1</sup>**

(1) A permit for an experimental project issued by the Food and Veterinary Service and a permit to the person responsible for the experimental project shall be required for the use of an animal in procedures.

(2) In addition to that laid down in Paragraph one of this Section it is allowed to use animals in procedures, which live in the wild, if a permit of the State Forest Service for the use of game animals of wild species in a procedure or a permit of the Nature Conservation Agency for the use of non-game animals of wild species in a procedure has been received.

(3) The Food and Veterinary Service shall issue the permit for an experimental project within 40 working days after receipt of all the necessary documents which have been prepared in compliance with the requirements specified in laws and regulations and include complete information required in the laws and regulations. The time period for the issue of the permit may be extended once for a period of up to 15 working days, provided that it has been justified on the complexity or multi-disciplinary nature of the experimental project.

(4) The issue of the permit for an experimental project is a paid service.

(5) The amount of the fee and payment procedures for the issue, amendment and renewal of a permit for an experimental project, as well as the amount of the fee and payment procedures

for the involvement of experts (researchers) necessary for the evaluation of an experimental project shall be determined by the Cabinet.  
[8 March 2012; 15 June 2017 / Paragraph four shall come into force on 1 January 2018. See Paragraph 19 of the Transitional Provisions]

#### **Section 26.<sup>2</sup>**

The State scientific institute *Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment* “BIOR” shall:

1) inform the European Commission about the laboratories which are able to ensure the conformity assessment (validation) through the use of methods of alternative approach which are not related to the use of animals or in which less animals are used, or which are related to less painful procedures;

2) consult the interested persons on the conformity and appropriateness of the alternative method recommended for the conformity assessment (validation).

[8 March 2012; 12 June 2014]

#### **Section 26.<sup>3</sup>**

(1) The State scientific institute *Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment* “BIOR” shall establish a Committee for the Protection of Animals Used for Scientific Purposes and co-ordinate its operation. The Committee for the Protection of Animals Used for Scientific Purposes shall include representatives of scientific institutions, as well as associations and foundations operating in the field of animal protection and welfare.

(2) The Cabinet shall approve the by-law of the Committee for the Protection of Animals Used for Scientific Purposes.

[12 June 2014]

#### **Section 26.<sup>4</sup>**

The Committee for the Protection of Animals Used for Scientific Purposes shall:

1) consult the competent authorities and animal welfare bodies, which are related to the acquisition, breeding, accommodation, rearing and use of experimental animals in procedures, and ensure exchange of best practice;

2) exchange information with the competent authorities of other European Union Member States about the operation of welfare bodies of experimental animals and evaluation of experimental projects, as well as share in experience of best practice with European Union Member States.

[12 June 2014]

### **Chapter VI Protection of Wild Animals**

#### **Section 27.**

It is prohibited to capture and keep in captivity wild amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, except in the cases specified in this Law and laws and regulations governing nature protection and hunting.

[31 March 2010; 15 June 2017]

### **Section 27.<sup>1</sup>**

It is prohibited to train and use as an exhibition animal an animal of wild species (both taken from the wild and bred in captivity), and show it to the public as an exhibition animal.  
*[15 June 2017]*

### **Section 28.**

*[6 December 2001]*

### **Section 29.**

It is prohibited to release a tamed wild animal, which is not accustomed to a life in the wild, into the open.

### **Section 30.**

*[6 December 2001]*

### **Section 31.**

A zoo has an obligation to create conditions as close to the natural environment of each animal species as possible and to ensure satisfaction of the physiological and zoo-psychological needs of an animal, as well as to provide visitors with information on the species displayed for public viewing and their natural living environment.

*[8 March 2012]*

### **Section 32.**

- (1) The Nature Protection Board shall issue a permit for the establishment of a zoo.
- (2) An owner (keeper) of the animals referred to in Section 3.<sup>1</sup> of this Law shall apply for the registration of the place of keeping animals of wild species in the Food and Veterinary Service in accordance with the procedures stipulated by the Cabinet.

*[6 December 2001; 8 July 2003; 31 March 2010]*

### **33.pants.**

Owner (keeper) of animals of wild species shall be required to have a document, as set out in the laws and regulations, on the origin (lawful acquisition) of each animal.

*[31 March 2010]*

### **34.pants.**

Owner (keeper) of animals of wild species has the obligation to create, for each species of animal, conditions approximating its natural environment and to ensure the satisfaction of the physiological and zoo-psychological needs of each species of animal.

*[31 March 2010]*

### **35.pants.**

A wild animal may be imported into the State and exported from the State in accordance with the requirements of the relevant laws and regulations.

*[6 December 2001]*

## **Section 35.<sup>1</sup>**

In order to ensure international protection for whitecoat pups of harp seals *Phoca groenlandica* and the pups of hooded seals *Cystophora cristata* of Greenlandic seals, it is prohibited to import raw furskins, tanned or dressed furskins (including assembled in different forms) , as well as articles of furskins, for commercial purposes.

[20 December 2007]

## **Chapter VII Protection of Animals during Their Transport**

### **Section 36.**

(1) An animal shall be transported by an appropriate means of transport, ensuring conditions not harmful to its health.

(2) If necessary, prior to transportation or during transportation, an animal may be injected with tranquillising medical substances, observing the instructions of a practising veterinarian.

(3) [31 March 2010]

(4) [31 March 2010]

[6 December 2001; 14 April 2005; 31 March 2010]

### **37.pants.**

An animal owner, or a person authorised by the owner, shall be responsible for the conformity with the requirements of this Law during the transportation of the animal.

### **Section 38.**

(1) Customs control of an animal being transported shall be carried out without delay.

(2) Delay of the transportation of an animal shall be permitted only for the good of the animal or in cases when there is cause for suspicion regarding the animal becoming ill with an infectious disease.

## **Chapter VIII Animal Sanctuaries and Animal Boarding Facilities**

### **Section 39.**

Local governments shall establish and maintain animal sanctuaries, catch, board and care for caught and alienated pet animals, as well as board and care for wild animals in a helpless situation or enter into agreements with a natural person or legal person regarding the catching, boarding, supporting and care of such animals.

[31 March 2010]

### **Section 40.**

Animal reproduction shall not be permitted in sanctuaries.

### **Section 41.**

(1) A sanctuary may release an animal to a person who has attained 18 years of age and who undertakes to ensure the welfare of the relevant animal.

(2) A sanctuary shall ensure the sterilisation of an animal, if it has not succeeded to find the owner or keeper thereof within 14 days.

(3) Information on the subsequent owner of the animal shall be retained by the sanctuary for not less than one year.

*[31 March 2010]*

#### **Section 42.**

A sanctuary shall provide the subsequent owner with information on the behaviour of and unique care features for the animal.

#### **Section 43.**

An animal owner may for a specific time leave the animal in the care of a boarding facility.

### **Chapter IX Killing of Animals**

#### **Section 44.**

It is prohibited to kill an animal. The prohibition does not apply to:

- 1) animals kept for farming purposes;
- 2) animal euthanasia;
- 3) hunting;
- 4) fishing;
- 5) invertebrates, insofar as it is not laid down otherwise in other laws, as well as to disinsection and deratization of mouse-like rodents;
- 6) cases, when an animal attacking a human being threatens his or her health or life;
- 7) cases, when a programme combating infectious diseases or invasive species provides for the killing of an animal;
- 8) the killing of experimental animals used, if it is provided for in the objective of the experiment;
- 9) catching of moles using mechanical traps.

*[14 April 2005; 31 March 2010; 12 June 2014]*

#### **Section 45.**

An animal may be killed only with the permission of the animal owner (in the case of euthanasia – with a permission in writing), except in the cases provided for in Section 5, Paragraph three and Section 44, Clauses 5, 6 and 7 of this Law.

*[31 March 2010]*

#### **Section 46.**

In the killing of an animal, the method which causes the least suffering for the animal shall be selected.

#### **Section 47.**

An animal kept for farming purposes may be killed if:



- 1) it has been bred for the production of food of animal origin intended for the human consumption and for raw materials for manufacturing;
- 2) the keeping of an animal has become economically disadvantageous due to its non-productivity;
- 3) an animal is under threat of death due to a disease or a trauma;
- 4) it has been provided for in a programme combating infectious diseases.

#### **Section 48.**

(1) It is allowed to slaughter an animal kept for farming purposes using stunning before slaughter, except for an animal of wild species kept in enclosed areas and beef animals kept in a free keeping system.

(2) An animal kept for farming purposes, using stunning after slaughter, may be slaughtered in a slaughterhouse in accordance with the traditional methods for meat production of religious communities and the laws and regulations regarding welfare requirements for the protection of animals kept for farming purposes and intended for slaughter.

(3) In a case of final necessity, an animal kept for farming purposes may be slaughtered without stunning, as well as in a case when, due to disease or trauma, the death of an animal is possible.

*[17 September 2009]*

#### **Section 49.**

Intentional killing of a pregnant animal kept for farming purposes is prohibited, except in the cases prescribed by a practising veterinarian.

#### **Section 50.**

It is permitted to perform euthanasia of an animal, if:

- 1) it has an incurable disease or during its aging process irreversible changes have arisen, which cause the animal suffering;
- 2) due to its aggressiveness, an animal has become dangerous to human beings or other animals;
- 3) an owner is not able to fulfil the duties referred to in Section 5, Paragraph two of this Law and in accordance with Section 5, Paragraph three of this Law has not been able to alienate the animal for an other person;
- 4) it has been provided for in a programme combating infectious diseases;
- 5) it is a stray animal and within 14 days it has not been possible to find the previous owner or a new owner;
- 6) a stray animal is found in severe traumatic condition;
- 7) a new owner is not found within 30 days after coming into force of the decision regarding confiscation of the animal;
- 8) a decision regarding euthanasia of a dog has come into force in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding the criteria and procedures by which a dog shall be recognised as dangerous and the action with it shall be determined.

*[31 March 2010]*

#### **Section 51.**

The euthanasia of an animal shall be performed by a practising veterinarian.

## **Section 52.**

- (1) In euthanasia, medical substances shall be used which cause an immediate and irreversible loss of consciousness and death.
- (2) After euthanasia, a practising veterinary shall make certain that biological death has set in for the animal.

### **Transitional Provisions**

1. Persons who have in their possession the animals mentioned in Section 16, at the time this Law comes into force, may not allow the reproduction of such animals and up to 1 July 2000 shall ensure the keeping of such animals in wild animal collections, or if this is not possible – euthanasia.

2. The Cabinet shall by 1 January 2006 issue regulations which regulate:

- 1) the welfare requirements for the keeping, training and use of sport, work and exhibition animals in competitions, work or exhibitions;

- 2) the welfare requirements of animals in animal sanctuaries and animal boarding facilities and the procedures by which an animal shall be transferred to an animal sanctuary or animal boarding facility;

- 3) the criteria and procedures by which a dog shall be recognised as dangerous, determine further action with it and the requirements for keeping of a dangerous dog;

- 4) the welfare requirements for the keeping, trade and showing at public exhibitions of pet animals, dog training and the rights and obligations of the owner and keeper of the pet animal.

*[14 April 2005]*

3. The Cabinet shall by 1 July 2003:

- 1) approve the requirements for the keeping, testing, training, trade and showing at public exhibitions of pet animals, requirements for the keeping of dangerous dogs, as well as the rights and obligations of the keeper of the pet animals;

- 2) approve the by-laws of the Animal Protection Ethics Council, determining its functions and activities.

*[6 February 2003]*

4. Section 8, Paragraph three of the Law and amendments to Section 39 of the Law in respect of the tasks of local governments in animal protection shall come into force on 1 January 2006.

*[14 April 2005]*

5. The Cabinet shall by 31 December of 2010 issue the regulations referred to in Section 10, Clauses 4, 5, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 of this Law.

*[31 March 2010]*

6. Until the day of coming into force of the Cabinet regulations referred to in Section 10, Clauses 4, 5, 15, 18, 20, 21 and 22 of this Law, the following Cabinet regulations shall be applied in so far as they are not in contradiction with this Law:

- 1) Cabinet Regulation No. 34 of 23 January 2001, Procedures for Acquiring of Individuals of Non-game Species, Introduction of Wild Animals not Characteristic to the Nature of Latvia, as well as for Issue of Permits for Renewal of Animal Populations in the Nature (Reintroduction);

2) Cabinet Regulation No. 185 of 8 May 2001, Regulation Regarding Requirements for Keeping of Wild Animals in Captivity and for Creation of a Collection of Wild Animals;

3) Cabinet Regulation No. 450 of 23 October 2001, Procedures for Keeping, Use, Trade and Killing of Animals Used for Experimental and Scientific Purposes;

4) Cabinet Regulation No. 180 of 15 April 2003, Procedures for the Keeping of Wild Animals in Enclosed Areas for the Acquisition of Products of Animal Origin or for the Purposes of Species Selection;

5) Cabinet Regulation No. 606 of 4 September 2007, Requirements in Relation to Catching of Stray Dogs and Cats;

6) Cabinet Regulation No. 634 of 18 September 2007, Regulation Regarding the State Fee for a Permit to use an Animal for Experiments and Training;

7) Cabinet Regulation No. 757 of 13 November 2007, Regulation Regarding the State Fee for a Permit for Creation and Operation of a Collection of Wild Animals.

*[31 March 2010]*

7. Section 4.<sup>1</sup> of this Law shall not apply to pet animals that have been born before 1 June 2010.

*[31 March 2010]*

8. Amendments to Section 10, Clause 18 of this Law shall come into force at the same time as the relevant amendments to the law On Taxes and Duties.

*[31 March 2010]*

9. Section 18.<sup>1</sup> of this Law shall come into force at the same time as the relevant amendments to the Veterinary Medicine Law.

*[31 March 2010]*

10. The Cabinet shall issue the regulations referred to in Section 10, Clause 4, Sub-clauses “a”, “b”, “c”, “d”, “e”, “f”, “g”, “h”, “i”, “j”, “k”, “l”, “m”, “n” and “o” and Section 24.<sup>2</sup> of this Law by 10 November 2012.

*[8 March 2012]*

11. The Cabinet shall issue the regulations referred to in Section 10, Clauses 8, 15, 20 and 23 of this Law by 31 December 2012.

*[8 March 2012]*

12. Until the day of coming into force of the Cabinet regulations referred to in Paragraphs 10 and 11 of Transitional Provisions of this Law, but not longer than until 31 December 2012 the following Cabinet regulations shall apply, insofar as they are not in contradiction with this Law:

1) Cabinet Regulation No. 1079 of 22 December 2008, Animal Transport Regulations;

2) Cabinet Regulation No. 1131 of 21 December 2010, Regulations Regarding Registration of Experimental Animal Breeders, Suppliers and Users, Procedures for Carrying out Activities Involving Experimental Animals, and Welfare Requirements to be Ensured for Experimental Animals;

3) Cabinet Regulation No. 1191 of 28 December 2010, Regulations Regarding State Fee for the Permit to Use an Animal in an Experiment;

4) Cabinet Regulation No. 1192 of 28 December 2010, Procedures for Catching Stray Dogs and Cats.

*[8 March 2012]*

13. The Cabinet shall issue the by-law of the Animal Protection Ethics Council referred to in Section 11, Paragraph two of this Law until 30 June 2013. Until the day of coming into force of the Cabinet regulation, but not later than until 30 June 2013 Cabinet Regulation No. 864 of 8 November 2011, By-law of the Animal Protection Ethics Council, shall apply, insofar as it is not in contradiction with this Law.

*[8 March 2012]*

14. Amendments to Section 10, Clauses 15 and 19 of this Law shall come into force concurrently with the relevant amendments to the law On Taxes and Duties.

*[8 March 2012]*

15. Section 24.<sup>1</sup> and Section 26.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph three of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2013.

*[8 March 2012]*

16. The Cabinet shall approve the by-law of the Animal Protection and Welfare Advisory Council by 1 October 2014.

*[12 June 2014]*

17. The Cabinet shall approve the by-law of the Committee for the Protection of Animals to be Used for Scientific Purposes by 31 December 2014.

*[12 June 2014]*

18. Amendment to Section 10 of this Law regarding deletion of Clause 15 shall come into force on 1 January 2018.

*[15 June 2017]*

19. Section 10, Clause 24 and Section 26.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph four of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2018.

*[15 June 2017]*

20. The Cabinet shall issue the regulations referred to in Section 10, Clause 24 and Section 26.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph five of this Law by 31 December 2017.

*[15 June 2017]*

### **Informative Reference to European Union Directives**

*[20 December 2007; 31 March 2010; 8 March 2012]*

This Law contains legal norms arising from:

1) Council Directive 83/129/EEC of 28 March 1983 concerning the importation into Member States of skins of certain seal pups and products derived therefrom;

2) Council Directive 89/370/EEC of 8 June 1989 amending Directive 83/129/EEC concerning the importation into Member States of skins of certain seal pups and products derived therefrom;

3) Council Directive 86/609/EEC on the approximation of laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States regarding the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes;

4) Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes;

5) Council Directive 1999/22/EC of 29 March 1999 relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos;

6) Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes. (Text with EEA relevance.)

This Law comes into force on 1 January 2000.

This Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 9 December 1999.

President

V. Vīķe-Freiberga

Rīga, 29 December 1999

**Animal Species Permitted for the Use in Procedures Only if They Have  
Been Bred in Establishments for Breeding Experimental Animals**

[15 June 2017]

No.	Animal species	Latin name
1.	Mouse	<i>Mus musculus</i>
2.	Rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>
3.	Guinea pigs	<i>Cavia porcellus</i>
4.	Syrian (golden) hamster	<i>Mesocricetus auratus</i>
5.	Chinese hamster	<i>Cricetulus griseus</i>
6.	Mongolian gerbil	<i>Meriones unguiculatus</i>
7.	Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>
8.	Dog	<i>Canis familiaris</i>
9.	Cat	<i>Felis catus</i>
10.	All species of non-human primates	
11.	Frog	<i>Xenopus (laevis, tropicalis)</i> <i>Rana (temporaria, pipiens)</i>
12.	Zebra fish	<i>Danio rerio</i>