

Brussels, 3 May 2007

Animals no longer part of the environment according to Commission Communication on the 6th Environment Action Programme

Eurogroup for Animals is deeply disappointed that the Commission has omitted any reference to the protection of animals in its communication on the mid-term review of the 6th Environment Action Programme published today.

The communication makes no mention of future activities or progress, on those objectives in the 6th Environment Action Programme which relate to animals, such as measures to minimise the need for animal testing, even though the revised Directive on animal experimentation is due to be published this year.

Nothing is said about the unnecessary and wasteful trade in animals and especially the import of millions of exotic animals for the pet trade, for which the EU is a huge market, nor its impact on biodiversity in third countries. Instead, the communication talks about “*access to and sharing of the benefits from genetic resources*” and development. Eurogroup fears that this will mean biodiversity exploitation and loss, rather than protection and conservation.

The Commission is completely ignoring the link between environmental protection, animal and human health and animal welfare, as outlined in Eurogroup’s submission to the Commission. Issues such as replacing pesticides with control methods which are less harmful to animals and people, and changing to more sustainable livestock production, need higher priority.

“The European Commission has forgotten that animals are part of the environment and must be protected before being used to the benefit of people.” says Sonja Van Tichelen, Director of Eurogroup for Animals. *“The link between high animal welfare standards and environmental protection is recognised by many and now enshrined in the EU’s Sustainable Development Strategy but the Communication ignores this completely. The commitment of the European Commission in the Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals earlier this year to integrate animal welfare in all EU policies has already been forgotten. It is shocking to see that animals have been overlooked although EU citizens have repeatedly expressed high concern about the way they are treated.”*

- ENDS -

For a copy of Eurogroup contribution: <http://www.eurogroupforanimals.org/policy/pdf/contri6eap.pdf>

The European Commission Communication is available at the following address:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2007/com2007_0225en01.pdf

For further information, contact:

Eurogroup for Animals - Tel: +32 2 740 08 20

Véronique Schmit - mobile: +32 477 539 394

6 rue des Patriotes – B - 1000 Brussels

Tel : +32 (0)2 740 08 20 - Fax : +32 (0)2 740 08 29

Email : info@eurogroupforanimals.org www.eurogroupforanimals.org