

# *“The Treaty of Lisbon - A New Era for Animal Welfare Policy Through Art. 13?”*

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In recent years the European Parliament has been one of the most prominent advocates of animal welfare legislation in the European Union. In its resolution of May 2010 on the *evaluation and assessment of the Animal Welfare Action Plan 2006-2010*, the European Parliament called upon the Member States to properly respect and enforce currently existing animal welfare legislation.

Stressing Article 13 of the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Parliament has for the first time explicitly called for a European animal welfare law by calling upon the Commission to submit, no later than 2014, a reasoned proposal for general animal welfare legislation for the European Union. In this regard, the Treaty of Lisbon may indeed create a new legal situation for future animal welfare policies.

However, the legal implications of Article 13 still need careful legal analysis to provide a common understanding of its possible future impact. In addition, political will in the Member States is needed in order to ensure that the European Union can translate its rhetoric about stricter animal welfare legislation into practice.

Finally, Article 13 may prove to be a useful instrument for ensuring the mutual recognition of European animal welfare standards, also within bilateral and multilateral agreements, including the WTO.