



Animal Protection Index (API) 2020

Islamic Republic of Iran: ranking G

Executive summary

Since the API was first published in 2014, there has been progress on animal welfare in Iran. For instance, in March 2016, the Department of Environment announced it would no longer issue permits allowing the use of wild animals in circuses, thus effectively banning the use of wild animals in circuses across the whole country. In March 2019, Iran also banned the construction of dolphinariums. Furthermore, in November 2017, the Department of Environment proposed the first Bill on the protection of animals. This Bill was tabled in the Iranian Parliament in September 2019; however, at the time of writing, this Bill had yet to be enacted. If passed, this Bill would become the first animal protection law in the country and would ban acts of physical violence to animals, such as beating, torture, deliberate injuries, as well as acts causing distress to animals, such as abandonment. Various uses of animals considered 'not compatible with their nature' would also be forbidden, which would include bestiality and the training of animals for circuses. Moreover, animal experiments have been banned in all primary and secondary schools since July 2019.

However, since the Bill on the protection of animals has not yet been passed by Parliament, there remain, at present, numerous legislative omissions in animal welfare law in Iran. Currently the country's legislation does not recognise animal sentience, and there is a lack of basic animal protection. For instance, animal cruelty is not prohibited, and there is no duty of care onto animal owners. There is a clear lack of specific welfare provisions for the rearing, transport and slaughter of farm animals. There is a lack of legal protection for draught animals. Moreover, fur farming is not banned in the country. In 2014, the killing of stray dogs and cats was banned in the city of Tabriz but is still allowed in other parts of the country.

The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for activities related to farm animals. The Department of the Environment has replaced the former Fishing and Hunting Organisation, hence having responsibility for wild animals. However, there is no Ministry responsible for animal welfare in Iran. There is a lack of government bodies dedicated to animal welfare in general, as well as for specific animal welfare issues, such as the use of animals in scientific research.

The Government of Iran is urged to adopt the draft Bill on the protection of animals, presented to Parliament in September 2019, which would ban animal cruelty acts and the abandonment of animals. The Government of Iran is strongly encouraged to include in this Bill a definition of animal welfare which would align with OIE standards, a duty of care onto animal owners, as well as a recognition of sentience for all vertebrates, cephalopods and decapod crustaceans. Further animal welfare provisions will stem from this recognition of sentience.

Moreover, the Government of Iran is urged to ban the worst forms of confinement for animals reared in farming, and to mandate humane slaughter for all livestock animal species. In addition, the Government of Iran is strongly encouraged to fully ban fur farming, which is inherently cruel and causes



pain, distress and suffering to animals. The Government of Iran is urged to outlaw the culling of stray animal populations throughout the whole country, and to implement spay-and-neuter campaigns as a tool to control stray animal populations. The Government of Iran is also strongly encouraged to ban the use of all animals for entertainment, in circuses for instance – whereas the current ban only applies to wild animals. Overall, the Government of Iran is strongly encouraged to align its current legislation with OIE standards. Responsibility for animal welfare should be allocated to a Ministry, and a specific government body should enact and assess the implementation of animal protection legislation. Such a government body should include representatives from animal welfare organisations. Further legal and policy recommendations are associated with each indicator and contained in the relevant sections of this report. Further legal and policy recommendations are associated with each Animal Protection Index (API) indicator and contained in the relevant sections of this report.



Animal Protection Index Indicators

Goal 1: Recognition of animal sentience and prohibition of animal suffering

1. Animal sentience is formally recognised in legislation

Analysis of the legislation	
Ranking	G
<p>There is no policy or legislation recognising animal sentience. In November 2017, Department of Environment (DOE) proposed a Bill on the protection of animals, which was initially approved by the presidential office. This draft Bill would forbid acts of physical violence against animals, as well as abandonment. No mention of animal sentience has been made.¹ The Bill was brought to the Iranian Parliament in September 2019.² At the time of writing, this Bill has not been enacted into law.</p> <p><i>Analysis</i></p> <p>The draft Bill on animal protection is a positive step towards recognising animal sentience, since this Bill acknowledges that animals can suffer physically and mentally – for instance, the prohibition on abandonment suggests that animals can experience stress, hence negative mental well-being.</p> <p>However, at the time of writing, this Bill has not yet been enacted into law. Furthermore, this Bill could be made stronger if animals were explicitly defined as sentient beings.</p>	
Enforcement mechanisms	
<p>There is no policy or legislation relevant to this indicator.</p>	
Key recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the extensive body of scientific evidence proving that animals are sentient, the Government of Iran is urged to recognise that all animals for whom there is scientific evidence – at a minimum, all vertebrates, cephalopods and decapods crustaceans – are sentient beings and to enshrine this principle into legislation. Recognising animals as sentient will underpin further animal welfare considerations. An explicit recognition of animal sentience should be 	

¹ <https://www.mizanonline.com/fa/news/365804/%D9%BE%DB%8C%D8%B4-%D9%86%D9%88%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D9%84%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AD%D9%87-%D9%85%D9%85%D9%86%D9%88%D8%B9%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AD%DB%8C%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A2%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%AA%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%87-%D8%B4%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B4-%D9%BE%D8%AF%DB%8C%D8%AF%D9%87-%D8%AD%DB%8C%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A2%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B2%D9%85%D9%86%D8%AF-%D8%B6%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%DA%A9%DB%8C%D9%81%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D9%86%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA>

² <http://www.payvand.com/news/19/sep/1012.html>



incorporated within the draft Bill for animal protection, presented to Parliament in September 2019.

2. There are animal protection laws that prohibit causing animal suffering either by a deliberate act of cruelty or by a failure to act

Analysis of the legislation	
Ranking	G
<p>In November 2017 Department of Environment (DOE) proposed a bill on protection of animals, which was initially approved by the presidential office. If accepted, this Bill would be the first animal protection law in the country. The Bill consists of eight Articles, which prohibit various kinds of animal abuses such as beating, torture, deliberate injuries, unnecessary surgeries, mutilating, or the mass murder of animals. The Bill regulates activities such as the killing animals whether for food, the use of animals for clothing or other products, as well as the keeping of animals for entertainment, education and research.³ Uses of animals ‘not compatible with their nature and life cycle’ are outlawed under this Bill, such as the sexual abuse of animals, training or using the animals for illegal purposes and circuses.</p> <p>Other acts will be considered a crime under the law, such as the destruction of habitats or nesting sites, poisoning the animals or their food, abduction of animals or the release of stray animals or non-native species in the margins of towns, villages or in the wild.</p> <p>This draft Bill would forbid acts of physical violence against animals, as well as abandonment. No mention of animal sentience has been made.⁴ The Bill was brought to the Iranian Parliament in September 2019.⁵ At the time of writing, this Bill has not been enacted into law, hence there is no anti-cruelty legislation in place in Iran.</p> <p>Analysis <i>The lack of legislation prohibiting animal abuse and cruelty limits severely the development of animal</i></p>	

³ <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/439951/Bill-on-protection-of-animals-brought-before-Majlis>

⁴ <https://www.mizanonline.com/fa/news/365804/%D9%BE%DB%8C%D8%B4-%D9%86%D9%88%DB%8C%D8%B3-%D9%84%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AD%D9%87-%D9%85%D9%85%D9%86%D9%88%D8%B9%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AD%DB%8C%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A2%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%AA%D9%87%DB%8C%D9%87-%D8%B4%D8%AF%DA%A9%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B4-%D9%BE%D8%AF%DB%8C%D8%AF%D9%87%D8%AD%DB%8C%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A2%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B2%D9%85%D9%86%D8%AF-%D8%B6%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%DA%A9%DB%8C%D9%81%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D9%86%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA>

⁵ <http://www.payvand.com/news/19/sep/1012.html>



welfare protection in the country, as there is no basic anti-cruelty legislation that can act as a starting point for improvement.

However, the draft Bill currently presented to Parliament would correct this. A first animal protection bill was proposed already in 2016. Several cases of animal cruelty mounted public criticism towards the lack of punishment for such cruel acts.⁶ In August 2019, following the release of videos online showing the killing of stray dogs in Tehran, the Environment Committee negotiated with the presidential office for legal affairs and requested to submit a new Bill on the protection of animals as soon as possible to Parliament. In case of approval through Parliament, the Bill will be sent to the Expediency Council to be enacted.

Enforcement mechanisms

The Bill on the protection of animals contains enforcement mechanisms to punish animal cruelty. However, since this Bill has not yet been passed at the time of writing, there are at present no enforcement mechanisms relevant to this indicator.

Key recommendations

- The Government of Iran is strongly encouraged to enact the Bill on the protection of animals, presented to Parliament in September 2019. This Bill outlaws cruel physical abuse of animals and pays attention to the psychological wellbeing of animals. Such legislation should prohibit animal cruelty and suffering by deliberate acts, as well as negligence. Penalties should be included in the law for breaches of anti-cruelty provisions.
- The Government of Iran is furthermore encouraged to include a definition of animal welfare in legislation, which should be in line with the OIE definition and explicitly promote the Five Freedoms.

Goal 2: Presence of animal welfare legislation

3. There are laws that apply to animals used in farming including rearing, transport and slaughter

Analysis of legislation	
Ranking	G
Rearing	

⁶ <https://www.rferl.org/a/iran-animal-cruelty-dogs-legislation-/28924336.html>



The Iranian Government addresses issues on environmental protection through the Department of Environment. This Department has produced some regulations on livestock transport, in 1994. However, due to a lack of available translation, such regulations have not been assessed for the Animal Protection Index.

Iran enacted the Law on Comprehensive System of Animal Husbandry in 2009.⁷ This Law aims to regulate issues relating to livestock, including increasing their productivity. The Ministry of Agriculture has the responsibility to enhance education, research and training in this sector. The Government is also entrusted with limiting the quantity and price of imported livestock products, in order to encourage domestic consumption.

Rearing - pigs

No legislation has been found specifically relating to the rearing of pigs.

Rearing - broiler chickens

No legislation has been found specifically relating to the rearing of broiler chickens.

Rearing - egg-laying hens

No legislation has been found specifically relating to the rearing of egg-laying hens.

Rearing - dairy cattle and calves

No legislation has been found specifically relating to the rearing of dairy cattle and calves.

Transport

No legislation has been found specifically relating to the transport of farm animals.

Slaughter

The Law on Comprehensive System of Animal Husbandry 2009 provides that the slaughter of any endangered species of livestock is only possible with specific permission and under supervision of an animal breeding expert and a veterinarian.⁸

Analysis

Law on Comprehensive System of Animal Husbandry 2009 appears to regulate sanitary issues related to meat production, rather than providing welfare provisions for farm animals. There does not appear to be any restriction on the forms of confinement in which animals can be kept. Humane slaughter is also not mandated in the law.

Enforcement mechanisms

⁷ <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/ira158995.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEX-FAOC158995>



It appears that there are no enforcement mechanisms relevant to this indicator. The Iranian Government is encouraged to clarify whether there are legal provisions with enforcement mechanisms relevant to the welfare of this category of animals.

Key recommendations

- The Government of Iran is urged to enact legislation detailing specific welfare requirements for farm animals during the phases of rearing, transport and slaughter. Such requirements should be legally binding and species-specific. Regular inspections onto farms and slaughter establishments should be carried out with a special focus on animal welfare.
- In addition, the Government of Iran is urged to ban the worst forms of confinement for farm animals. In particular, the use of farrowing crates, sow stalls, and cages should be banned. The stocking density of broiler chickens should also be reduced to a maximum of 30 kg/m² or lower. Surgical operations, such as piglet mutilations and beak trimming for egg-laying hens, should not be performed except under anaesthesia and with analgesics.
- The Government of Iran is urged to mandate the humane slaughter of all farm animals. Animals should be instantaneously rendered unconscious and insensible to pain and distress prior to slaughter. Today, there is growing consensus amongst religious authorities worldwide that pre-slaughter stunning is compatible with religious principles.⁹ Humane halal slaughter allows for the animal to be temporarily rendered unconscious via stunning prior to slaughter, as long as the animal's skull remains intact and the animal would regain consciousness in time should slaughter not occur. Therefore, animals should be unconscious before being bled, and no further processing should occur until irreversible loss of consciousness is confirmed. No animal should be forced to witness other animals being slaughtered as this is inherently distressing.
- Legislation regarding the transport of animals shall protect their Five Freedoms. Due to the significant animal welfare concerns associated with long distance transport, the Government of Iran is strongly urged to ban the export of live animals for long distances (i.e. over eight hours) and replace it with a meat only trade. Long distance transport is inherently cruel as it involves chronic stress for all animals and, for some species and modes of transport, it may involve overpopulation, exhaustion, excess heat or cold, inadequate ventilation and/or access to food and water, leading to disease, pain, injury or death.

⁹ [http://www.fao.org/3/x6909e/x6909e09.htm#b5-Religious%20or%20ritual%20slaughter%20\(Halal%20and%20Kosher\)](http://www.fao.org/3/x6909e/x6909e09.htm#b5-Religious%20or%20ritual%20slaughter%20(Halal%20and%20Kosher))

4. There are laws that apply to animals in captivity

Analysis of the legislation	
Ranking	G
<p><u>Zoos</u></p> <p>No legislation has been found specifically relating to the keeping animals in zoos. It has been reported that when the Department of Environment (DOE) decides to issue a permit for the construction of a zoo, this permit had to be approved by the Veterinary Organisation.¹⁰</p> <p>The Government's 2010 report to the Convention on Biological Diversity refers to captive breeding programmes for endangered and threatened species but there is no information regarding any animal welfare provisions pertaining to such programmes.</p> <p><u>Private keeping of wild animals</u></p> <p>No legislation has been found specifically relating to the private keeping of wild animals.</p> <p><u>Fur farming</u></p> <p>No legislation has been found specifically relating to fur farming.</p> <p><u>Analysis</u></p> <p><i>There appears to be no legislation or policy with regards to the welfare of animals in captivity. However, media reports suggest that the Government may be prepared to take action to address cases of cruelty in zoos.¹¹ It also appears that public interest in protecting the welfare of animals kept in captivity may be increasing.¹² Furthermore, in 2018 the Department of Environment (DOE) announced it will launch an online monitoring system of zoos across the country.¹³</i></p>	
Enforcement mechanisms	
<p>It appears that there is no policy or legislation relevant to this indicator. The Government is encouraged to clarify whether there are legal provisions with enforcement mechanisms protecting animals in this category.</p>	
Key recommendations	

¹⁰ <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/426631/Iranian-zoos-to-be-monitored-online>

¹¹ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/iran-blog/2014/apr/30/iran-zoo-government-prosecution-babolsar-bear-mistreatment-social-networks>

¹² <http://observers.france24.com/content/20120622-video-live-donkeys-fed-zoo-lions-sparks-outrage-iran-sari-spca-tehran-prevention-cruelty-animals>

¹³ <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/426631/Iranian-zoos-to-be-monitored-online>



- The Government of Iran is highly encouraged to introduce detailed legislation specifying the conditions under which wild animals may be kept in captivity. Such regulations should include requirements with regards to housing, feeding, handling and husbandry and should promote the Five Freedoms of all individual animals. The Government of Iran should mandate regular inspections to be carried out at zoos. Results of such inspections should be made publicly available.
- The Government of Iran is urged to fully ban fur farming. Fur farming is inherently cruel and causes pain, distress and suffering to animals.
- The Government of Iran is encouraged to develop a Positive List of species, specifying which animals can be kept as companion animals, based on clear criteria including animal welfare and other relevant concerns.

5. There are laws that apply to companion animals

Analysis of the legislation	
Ranking	G
<p><u>Care of companion animals</u></p> <p>Iran does not appear to have legislation or policy with regards to the welfare of companion animals. It is reported that the Government has discussed introducing legislation to criminalise dog ownership.^{14,15} In 2019, the capital city Tehran has banned dog-walking, to discourage people from owning pets.¹⁶</p> <p><u>Stray animals</u></p> <p>In 2014, the city of Tabriz has banned the killing of stray dogs and cats, requiring instead that they are taken to a private animal shelter.¹⁷ The Government is encouraged to comment on whether there are similar rules in place in other parts of the country.</p> <p><u>Analysis</u></p> <p><i>It appears that, at national level, there is no legislation or policy to protect companion animals. There is not an outright ban on pet ownership in Tehran, but it is reported that since the Islamic revolution in 1979, keeping dogs has been 'contentious'.¹⁸</i></p>	

¹⁴ <http://blog.iranrights.org/kahrizak-in-the-news-animal-cruelty/>

¹⁵ <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2065873,00.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/01/30/iran-bans-dog-walking-tehran/>

¹⁷ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/negar-mojtahedi/post_8178_b_5660215.html

¹⁸ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/01/30/iran-bans-dog-walking-tehran/>



There are problems with stray dog and cat populations in the country, especially in urban areas, and the Government is encouraged to consider humane population control methods such as trap-neuter-return.

Enforcement mechanisms

It appears that there is no policy or legislation relevant to this indicator. The Government is encouraged to clarify whether there are legal provisions with enforcement mechanisms protecting animals in this category.

Key recommendations

- The Government of Iran is urged to enact the Bill on the protection of animals, presented to Parliament in September 2019, which should include a duty of care of animal owners onto their companion animals. The Government should also promote responsible pet ownership, including the adoption of companion animals over the purchase of commercially bred animals.
- The Government of Iran is strongly encouraged to introduce legislation to promote humane dog population management, which relies on promoting responsible ownership, mass dog vaccinations and reproduction control programmes. Culling is unnecessary, cruel and has been proven to be ineffective. The Government of Iran should also implement education programmes on dog bite prevention.
- The Government of Iran is encouraged to engage with the International Companion Animal Management (ICAM) coalition to learn about and implement their dog population management methodology. This methodology consists of a full cycle of action, addressing the root causes of conflict between roaming dog and communities. The document is helpful to governments to manage dogs humanely as well as to help communities to live in harmony with dogs.

6. There are laws that apply to animals used for draught or recreational purposes

Analysis of the legislation

Ranking	F
----------------	----------

It appears that there is no legislation or policies to protect draught animals or animals used for recreational purposes.



The Government is encouraged to confirm whether there is legislation prohibiting mistreatment of animals in this category, as suggested in relation to zoo animals by media reports.¹⁹

Animals used for entertainment

On 20 March 2016, the Department of Environment announced it would no longer issue permits allowing the use of wild animals in circuses, thus effectively banning the use of wild animals in circuses across the whole country.²⁰ It is reported that the Bill on the protection of animals, presented to Parliament in September 2019, outlaws the use of animals in circuses.²¹

In March 2019, Iran banned the construction of dolphinarium in the country, after one dolphinarium attempted to open in the city of Ahvaz.²²

Draught animals

No legislation has been found specifically relating to animals used for draught.

Analysis

It is positive that, since the API was first published, the Department of Environment has banned the use of wild animals in circuses in all 31 Iranian states, as well as the construction of dolphinarium. Several animal rights organisations such as Animal Rights Watch (ARW) and Animal Defenders International campaigned against animal circuses since 2014.²³ However, it is not clear whether existing circuses using wild animals will be closed. The animal protection Bill presents the opportunity to extend the ban on the use of wild animals in circuses to all animals, or to other forms of entertainment exploiting animals.

It is positive that Iran has banned the construction of dolphinarium in the country. Hamid Zahrabi, then Deputy Director of Iran's Department of Environment supported this decision.²⁴

However, there appears to be a lack of legal provisions protecting the welfare of animals used for draught.

Enforcement mechanisms

The Department of Environment has announced it will no longer issue permits for circuses intending to use wild animals in their act, however, it is not clear whether penalties are in place for circuses operating without a permit. The Government is urged to clarify whether there are legal provisions with enforcement mechanisms protecting animals in this category.

¹⁹ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/iran-blog/2014/apr/30/iran-zoo-government-prosecution-babolsar-bear-mistreatment-social-networks>

²⁰ <https://vegnews.com/2016/3/iran-bans-wild-animal-circuses>

²¹ <http://www.payvand.com/news/19/sep/1012.html>

²² <https://vegnews.com/2019/3/iranian-government-animals-should-not-be-exploited-for-recreational-purposes>

²³ <https://www.stopcircussuffering.com/news/middle-east/iran-says-no-wild-animal-circuses/>

²⁴ <https://vegnews.com/2019/3/iranian-government-animals-should-not-be-exploited-for-recreational-purposes>

Key recommendations

- The Government of Iran is urged to forbid the organisation of and attendance to entertainment events causing animal suffering. Such a prohibition should cover circuses, rodeos, animal fights, animal races, rides on wild animals and all other forms of entertainment. The Government of Iran is to be commended for having banned the construction of dolphinarium. Building upon the 2016 ban on the use of wild animals in circuses, the Government is strongly encouraged to extend this ban to cover the use of all animals in circuses.
- Furthermore, the Government of Iran is strongly encouraged to adopt specific legislation to address the welfare of working animals, including working equids, following the requirements of the OIE's animal welfare standards (Chapter 7.12). Working animals must be treated with consideration and must be given adequate shelter, exercise, care, food and water appropriate to their physiological and behavioural needs. Any condition which may impair their welfare must be treated promptly, and any affected animals must not be worked again until they are fit. They must not be overworked or overloaded, nor must they be forced to work through ill-treatment.

7. There are laws that apply to animals used for scientific research

Analysis of the legislation

Ranking

F

It appears that there is no legislation or policy to protect animals used for scientific research. It is reported that Animal Ethics Committees were established in 2004 in approximately 50 medical universities in Iran, with the objective of promoting animal welfare and ethics, taking into account Islamic principles and world trends for the improvement of laboratory animal welfare.²⁵ These Animal Ethics Committees could inform government policy regarding action to promote the welfare of this category of animals. The Government is encouraged to comment on this.

In September 2019, the Deputy of Education at the Ministry of Education in Iran ordered all subordinate departments and schools that all vivisection activities must be stopped in all primary and secondary schools, as well as scientific contests taking place in Iran.²⁶ The ban entered into force on 27 July 2019.

The use of animal testing for cosmetic products does not appear to be restricted in Iranian legislation.

Analysis

There appears to be a lack of legislation on the use of animals in scientific research. In particular, the

²⁵ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20822325>

²⁶ <https://lushprize.org/iran-ends-animal-testing-education/>



Three Rs principles – Replacement, Reduction, Refinement – do not appear to be incorporated within legislation.

However, it is positive that Animal Ethics Committees were established in 50 universities in 2004. Furthermore, the recent decision to ban animal experiments in primary and secondary schools is commended.

Enforcement mechanisms

There is no policy or legislation relevant to this indicator.

Key recommendations

- The Government of Iran is urged to enact legislation which would protect all animals used in scientific research from unnecessary pain and suffering. The Three Rs principles – Replacement, Reduction, Refinement – should be enshrined in legislation.
- The Government of Iran is encouraged to ensure that Animal Ethics Committees in medical universities should be able to suspend the activities or revoke the registration of establishments that do not respect animal welfare criteria. Animals used for research should be provided with shelter, care, food and water in a manner appropriate to their physiological and behavioural needs. A nominated member of the laboratory staff, preferably a veterinarian, must have full responsibility for animal welfare at all times.
- The Government of Iran is urged to ban the testing of cosmetic products and their ingredients on animals.

8. There are laws that apply to wild animals

Analysis of the legislation

Ranking	E
<p>Iran’s Constitution includes a statement regarding protection of the environment and preventing its pollution and degradation. Article 50 states that all legal and real persons have a duty to protect the environment and prohibits all activities, economic or otherwise, that may result in irreparable damage to the environment.²⁷</p> <p>The Law on Hunting and Fishing²⁸ was enacted in 1967, which requires that anyone wishing to hunt or fish must first obtain a licence, issued by the Fishing and Hunting Organisation. This Organisation</p>	

²⁷ <https://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/ir/ir001en.pdf>

²⁸ <http://www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEXFAOC167683>

was replaced in 1971 by the Department of Environment.

The Environmental Protection Law was passed in 1975.²⁹ This Law states that the Department of Environment and the High Council for Environmental Protection are responsible for establishing a system of supervision and monitoring for wildlife and marine resources, as well as establishing limitations for hunting and shooting in some protected areas.

The Government has reported to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) regarding its legislative framework for the protection and utilisation of natural resources, including wildlife. Its latest report dates from 2015.³⁰ In order to fulfil Target 12 of the CBD states that 'by 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced'.³¹ To fulfil this target, the Iranian Government stated in its 5th National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity that it has established a Special Wildlife Committee and is revising policies on hunting and fishing.³² At the time of writing, no revised version of these laws have been found.

Analysis

Relevant legislation relates to conservation and to regulation of hunting activities. There are no indications of individual wildlife protection with a focus on animal welfare, but rather an attempt to achieve administrative control of human consumption of living resources and some policies on conservation of biological diversity.

In its 2015 report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Iranian Government reported on a successful project to conserve cheetahs and also on activities regarding other endangered and threatened species.³³ The action of the Government on conservation issues is very encouraging. However, the issue of wild animal welfare does not appear to be a concern, and the Government is encouraged to develop legislation with respect to activities and practices that have a direct negative impact on the welfare of individual wild animals.

The Government advises that barriers to progress regarding conservation of biological diversity include resistance from some stakeholders because of the socio-economic complexity of the country, which includes very diverse people, different cultures, livelihood and behaviours.³⁴ For example, bird hunting is a traditional activity and hunting tourism takes place in the country.^{35,36} It appears there are considerable barriers to improvement regarding the welfare of wild animals. Other barriers include habitat destruction, poaching and unsustainable hunting.³⁷

²⁹ <http://www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEX-FAOC034983>

³⁰ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ir/ir-nr-05-en.pdf>

³¹ <https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/rationale/target-5/>

³² <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ir/ir-nr-05-en.pdf>

³³ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ir/ir-nr-05-en.pdf>

³⁴ <http://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ir/ir-nr-04-en.pdf>

³⁵ <http://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ir/ir-nr-04-en.pdf>

³⁶ <http://iranjasminsafarico.com/index.php>

³⁷ <http://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ir/ir-nr-04-en.pdf>

Enforcement mechanisms

Penalties for offenders of the Game and Fish Laws include fines and arrest, depending on the conduct or the animal hunted. The Ministry of War can revoke arms licences for offenders.

The Government has reported to the Convention on Biological Diversity that measures are implemented to prevent trade in endangered and threatened wildlife with respect to CITES.³⁸

Key recommendations

- **The Government of Iran is encouraged to ban any form of hunting that does not directly support subsistence i.e. for feeding oneself or one's family and not for commercial gain. Subsistence hunting operations must employ the least cruel methods of hunting and slaughter, and that all possible efforts should be made to reduce the time to death of animals killed in these hunts. At a minimum, the Government is strongly encouraged to forbid the use of the cruellest hunting methods.**

Goal 3: Establishment of supportive government bodies

9. The Government has assigned responsibility and accountability for improving animal protection at a high government level and has provided resources

Analysis of the legislation

Ranking

G

Through the Ministry of Jihad-e-Sazandegi (responsible for agriculture matters), responsibility for activities in relation to farm animals rests within the Department of Animal Production, and the Department of the Environment regulates issues including livestock transport.

In 1971, the Department of the Environment replaced the former Fishing and Hunting Organisation.³⁹ The Organisation's responsibilities included to grant hunting licences, conduct research and training programmes, create protected areas and cooperate with domestic and international agencies.

Furthermore, the Department of Environment has put forth the Bill on the protection of animals, which suggests that it may be responsible for enforcing anti-cruelty provisions in the future.⁴⁰ However, no information was located explaining how various government departments have responsibility to address any specific animal welfare issues.

³⁸ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ir/ir-nr-05-en.pdf>

³⁹ <http://www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEXFAOC167683>

⁴⁰ <http://www.payvand.com/news/19/sep/1012.html>



Information provided to the OIE on the regional representation for Asia and the Pacific on OIE's National Focal Points for Animal Welfare shows that the attendee from Iran represents a veterinary association and the Ministry of Agriculture.⁴¹

Analysis

There are no indications that the Iranian government has assigned responsibility for animal welfare issues to a specific Ministry or Department. It is a positive development that the Department of the Environment has introduced Bill on the protection of animals on the protection of animals, however, it is not clear which government Ministry would be responsible for enforcing animal protection provisions, should this Bill be passed by Parliament.

Enforcement mechanisms

There is no policy or legislation relevant to this indicator.

Key recommendations

- **The Government of Iran is urged to assign responsibility for animal welfare, in addition to animal health, to a Ministry. This Ministry should be responsible for enacting animal welfare legislation and for monitoring the implementation of animal welfare standards.**
- **In addition, the Government of Iran is strongly encouraged to create a multi-stakeholder committee in order to effectively engage all actors involved in maintaining animals' well-being to find solutions for welfare concerns. This committee would guide the country's policies and strategies on animal welfare, in line with international standards. This committee should include representatives of animal welfare organisations.**

Goal 4: Support for international animal welfare standards

10. The Government has incorporated the OIE's guiding principles for animal welfare and its animal welfare standards into policy and legislation

Analysis of the legislation

Ranking	G
----------------	----------

The OIE Animal Welfare Standards focus on transport, slaughter, production systems (beef cattle, broiler chickens, dairy cattle, pigs), stray dog population control, the use of animals in research and education, and working equids.⁴²

⁴¹ <http://www.rr-middleeast.oie.int/viewpage.asp?ID=850>

⁴² <http://www.oie.int/infographic/StandardsAW/index.html>



It appears that all the OIE's guiding principles and standards are yet to be transposed into legislation and policy in Iran. The Government is encouraged to clarify whether any existing legislation such as the transport regulations and the Law on Animal Husbandry contain any welfare considerations relating to the OIE's guiding principles and standards.

Analysis

The OIE's standards on animal welfare not only represent a consensual position achieved by countries represented in the organisation with regards to this subject matter, but also provide scientific background to produce sound policy and legislation on animal welfare. Incorporating the OIE's standards into relevant legislation would therefore improve protection for animals in the country.

Enforcement mechanisms

There is no policy or legislation relevant to this indicator.

Key recommendations

- **The Government of Iran is strongly encouraged to implement the OIE's animal welfare standards and principles within policy and legislation.**

11. The Government has pledged in principle support for the Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare (UDAW)

Analysis of the legislation

The Government of Iran has not pledged in principle support for the Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare.

Note: The UDAW is a proposed formal international acknowledgement of a set of principles giving animal welfare due recognition among governments and the international community. An expression of support for the UDAW demonstrates a government's commitment to working with the international community to improve animal welfare.

Analysis

Support for the UDAW would be a first step into integrating animal protection considerations into different discussion tables, becoming a source of inspiration for decision makers interested in improving animal protection in the country.

Enforcement mechanisms

There are no enforcement mechanisms relevant to this indicator.

Key recommendations



- The Government of Iran is encouraged to pledge in principle support for the UDAW. Support for the UDAW will likely underpin further animal protection measures.

Last edited: 23 November 2019

Publication: March 2020