



## Transatlantic Animal Welfare Council

23 October 2012

### **TAWC Contribution to the EU and US call for input on regulatory issues for possible future trade agreement**

1. The Transatlantic Animal Welfare Council (TAWC) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the consultation by the High-Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth on regulatory issues for a possible future trade agreement between the US and the EU. TAWC has taken note of the initiative of the EU and US to investigate how increased EU/US trade can stimulate growth and competitiveness
2. TAWC was created in 2010 by leading organisations from the US and the EU dedicated to animal welfare. This platform was established with the objectives of strengthening the cooperation between animal welfare organisations, and achieving higher standards of animal welfare in European Union and the US. The TAWC monitors transatlantic trade relations and responds to the activities of the EU-US Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC). TAWC offers sound and unique expertise on welfare issues relating to wildlife, farm animals, companion animals, animals used in research and trade.
3. TAWC welcomes the recognition in the joint letter from the EU and the US inviting contributions to the consultation of the need for the US and the EU to respect each other's right to protect public health, safety, welfare and the environment. TAWC would be grateful if both the US and the EU add animal welfare to this list.
4. TAWC believes that trade policy should not only be a driver to obtain economic growth and jobs but should seek to promote sustainable development, green growth and job creation and protection of the environment and animal welfare.
5. TAWC believes that the strengthening of transatlantic relations should be accompanied by the development of a transatlantic animal welfare strategy which would be applicable in both regions.
6. The pursuit of *“the reduction, elimination, or prevention of barriers to trade in goods, services and investment”*<sup>1</sup> should not be detrimental to societal values such as animal protection, the precautionary principle or undermine existing and future standards. The strengthening of transatlantic economic relations should not threaten existing US or EU

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<sup>1</sup> In the mandate given by the EU-US leaders chairing the *Transatlantic Economic Council* (TEC) to the *High-Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth*, (November 28, 2011 EU-US summit).

animal protection or environmental protection policies, especially in relation to animal farming. We would not, for example, wish to see either the US or the EU being required to weaken their regulatory provisions regarding cloning and products from cloned animals and their descendants, the use of antimicrobials in livestock production and hormones.

- 7.** TAWC considers that it is important to improve cooperation when dealing with standards on animal protection (farm animals, companion animals and wildlife). This would allow a better alignment of EU and US approaches towards addressing the global challenge of animal protection and conservation.
- 8.** Trade negotiations should not be launched before a thorough global, as well as sector-specific economic, social and environmental impact assessment -in particular on the welfare of animals- has been carried out.
- 9.** There should be regular exchange of information at an early stage on the state of science knowledge and risk assessment. This would foster a harmonised regulatory environment between the EU and the US, based on best practices and standards related to animals.
- 10.** In relation to trade, we urge the EU and the US to recognise each other's right to require imported animal products to be derived from animals that have been treated to standards equivalent to their own.