



September 25, 2025

Technical Specialist Su
Animal Protection Division
Taiwan Ministry of Agriculture

Dear Technical Specialist Su,

Please see below recommendations from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals regarding the Ministry of Agriculture's draft regulation "Regulations Governing the Sources, Scope of Application and Management of Laboratory Animals."

For Article 2 of the draft, regarding the types of animals used in experiments, we recommend that individual species be omitted, and instead that a categorical description such as "vertebrates" be used. This is simpler and clearer, complies with the definition of animals in the parent law, the Animal Protection Act, and avoids omissions. The Ministry of Agriculture publishes annual Humane Care of Laboratory Animals reports. For example, in the most recent 2023 report,¹ species such as ferrets, sheep, dogs, cats, monkeys, birds, snakes, reptiles, and amphibians, which were included in the report, are not listed in the draft. It is unclear whether this is an accidental omission or whether there is a plan to develop separate regulations for those unlisted species. If the former, it must be revised, as it would otherwise leave too many species unregulated and unprotected. If the latter, the draft's title must be changed to avoid misleadingly implying that it applies to all animals used in experiments. Regarding the sourcing of animals used in experiments, neither the European Union² nor the United Kingdom³ laws exclude any animals from the definitions of animals under their respective laws. This is provided for your consideration.

For Article 3.1 of the draft, regarding the requirement that domestic animal supply facilities be AAALAC-accredited, PETA conducted a study⁴ and found that AAALAC-accredited facilities in the U.S. violated the U.S. animal protection laws more frequently than non-accredited facilities. (315 accredited facilities had 672 violations over two years, an average of 2.13 violations per

¹ Taiwan Ministry of Agriculture. Humane Care of Laboratory Animals Annual Report 2023. October 2024.

https://animal.moa.gov.tw/public/files/TB_ListTemplate/202503170355520001.pdf

² European Union. 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. October 20, 2010. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2010/63/oj>

³ legislation.gov.uk. Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. n.d.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/14/section/7/enacted>

⁴ Goodman JR, Chandna A, Borch C. Does accreditation by the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC) ensure greater compliance with animal welfare laws?. Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science. 2015 Jan 2;18(1):82-91.

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facility; 508 non-accredited facilities had 790 violations, an average of 1.56 violations per facility.) Even after controlling for the number of animals and sizes of the facilities, accredited facilities still had significantly more violations. It has been over a decade since that study. However, PETA's latest investigation,⁵ published this year, found that AAALAC-accredited laboratories continue to violate laws. (The 20 institutions receiving the most funding from the National Institute of Health reported 231 violations over two years, averaging 11.55 violations per institution. All 20 institutions were accredited.) This demonstrates that AAALAC accreditation has not helped improve compliance and animal welfare at laboratories, and that no progress has been made in the past decade. While AAALAC conducts triennial audits, these are scheduled rather than unannounced, making them ineffective as supervisory and oversight mechanisms. Rather than requiring AAALAC accreditation, it would be far more effective for Taiwan's central authorities to increase unscheduled and unannounced audits.

Regarding Article 3.2 of the draft, if overseas animal suppliers only need to comply with the animal supply regulations of the exporting country/region, there may be a problem with so-called “ethics dumping,” such as importing animals from regions with poorer animal welfare standards. This is especially true since many regions neighboring Taiwan have worse animal welfare regulations than Taiwan, and some even have no animal protection laws at all. To prevent “ethics dumping,” please refer to Articles 17 and 18 of the TRUST CODE,⁶ established by the TRUST Project, which is a European Union-sponsored initiative to combat “ethics dumping.” Simply put, the standards for animal suppliers overseas must be no less stringent than animal suppliers in Taiwan, and the welfare of animals from overseas must be no less favorable than that of animals from Taiwan.

Regarding Article 4 of the draft, which prohibits wild capture with exceptions approved by a care committee or panel, we recommend that additional clarification be added to define the context and provide the legal basis for the care committee or panel. For example, it can state, “Exceptions are allowed for cases where the care committee or panel deems it scientifically necessary and does not violate relevant international regulations.” Scientific necessity should be the only exception; other reasons, such as convenience and economic advantages, should not be considered. The inclusion of the requirement that international regulations must not be violated is because in some cases, while scientifically necessary, wild capture may violate international conservation or import and export regulations. However, species that are more susceptible to wild capture, such as dogs, cats, monkeys, birds, snakes, reptiles, and amphibians, are not included in the list of animals in Article 2 of the draft. Therefore, for this article to be effective, the content of Article 2 must be revised. Neither the European Union⁷ nor the United Kingdom⁸ laws prohibiting wild capture of animals used in experiments exclude any animals from the definitions of animals under their respective laws. This is provided for your consideration.

⁵ Elyse A, Chandna A, Wagaman E. A Study of Welfare Violations in Laboratories: Failures of Federal Oversight under the Health Research Extension Act of 1985. *J. Animal & Env't L.* 2025;16:1.

⁶ TRUST. The TRUST Code. 2018. https://www.globalcodeofconduct.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/The_TRUST_Code.pdf

⁷ European Union. 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. October 20, 2010. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2010/63/oj>

⁸ UK Home Office. Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 Working with animals taken from the wild. July 2016. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a82d90040f0b62305b94aa1/working-with-wild-animals-160706.pdf>

Regarding Article 5 of the draft, which states, "If, upon review, the application does not violate the provisions of this regulation and that a penalty has been determined, the central competent authority shall approve it," it is unclear what the "penalty" refers to. The draft does not mention any penalties. We recommend that clear and comprehensive penalties be added to ensure compliance.

We thank the Ministry of Agriculture for drafting this regulation and we hope you will adopt our suggestions. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at FrancesC@peta.org.
Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'y cheng', written in a cursive style.

Frances Cheng, Ph.D.
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