



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Crisis preparedness in food, animals and plants
The Director

Brussels,
SANTE/G3/AMP/iv(2024) 1147346

Subject: Messages of support for Fur Free Europe - regarding the pending decision on the ECI to end fur sales and fur farming in the EU

Dear Petitioners,

President von der Leyen has asked me to thank you for your messages of January 2024 calling on the Commission to ban fur farming and the sales of farmed fur in Europe.

In your messages you also refer to the European Citizens Initiative “Fur Free Europe” and express your support to it.

I wish to share with you that on the 7 December 2023 the Commission published a Communication¹ responding to the European Citizens Initiative (ECI) “Fur Free Europe”² in accordance with the regulatory framework of the European Union governing the European Citizens’ Initiative and the specific Regulation 2019/788 setting out detailed rules on the ECI.

The Communication sets out the Commission's legal and political conclusions on the initiative and the actions it intends to take as a response.

In this context I would like to inform you about the follow up to this Initiative, presented in detail in the text of the Communication, describing the planned actions of the European Commission regarding fur farming in the European Union.

The Commission's actions will concern: the welfare of animals kept for fur production; the One health dimension; the environmental aspects linked to Invasive alien species; and labelling aspects, mainly on textile products, related to the animals kept for fur production.

The Commission requested the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to provide by March 2025 a scientific opinion on the protection of animals kept for fur production.

Based on this scientific outcome the Commission will consider by March 2026 whether it would be appropriate to propose a prohibition, after a transition period, on the keeping in farms and killing of farmed mink, foxes, raccoon dogs or chinchilla, and whether it is

¹ https://citizens-initiative.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2023-12/C_2023_8362_EN.pdf

² https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-welfare/eci/eci-fur-free-europe_en

appropriate to propose a prohibition, after a transition period, of the placing on the Union market of fur and fur products derived from these farmed animals.

The option to adopt, through EU legislation, appropriate standards suited to better address the welfare needs of the animals will also be considered based on the outcome of the EFSA assessment.

A series of actions will take place in 2024 regarding: the One Health dimension with three on-site visits organized to mink/fur farms exploring the controls and the One Health mechanisms in place, which may include animal welfare aspects; the Commission will also consider whether to propose to include American mink (*Neovison vison*) in the list of invasive alien species of Union concern under the IAS Regulation³ and will also finalise an evaluation and impact assessment preparing the revision of the Textile Labelling Regulation to provide detailed labelling information to consumers on the presence of real fur in all apparel and related products. Based on the outcomes of the assessment the Commission will decide if a revision is opportune.

We have been acting to improve the animal welfare for the past 40 years and animal welfare is and will remain a priority for the Commission.

Thank you very much for your commitment to improve animal welfare.

Yours sincerely,

[e-signed]

Bernard Van Goethem

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1483614313362&uri=CELEX:32014R1143>