# Digital Tool of the EU Platform on animal welfare

*Guidelines, terms and conditions*

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# EU Platform on animal welfare – Digital Tool
# Terms and Conditions

## Basic Terms

You are responsible for your use of the Digital Tool of the EU Platform on animal welfare ("the Tool"), for any content you publish and for the consequences that may result from publishing that content. Any content you publish on the website will only be visible to its users i.e. members of the EU Platform on animal welfare.

The Tool will facilitate meetings preparation and follow-ups, but also provide participants with a means of continued discussion between meetings.

The Tool consists of:

- A **landing page** visible to the wider public, introducing the work of the EU Platform on animal welfare. The page also displays a main menu with the following tabs: *Home*, *Digital Tool Structure*, *Who can join*, *About*.
- The **Agora** is an open and general conversation area to which all Platform members have free access. It is a common online space to boost discussion, publish news and schedule events on animal welfare related issues.
- **Subgroups**: working networks on very specific animal welfare related issues, as mandated by the Commission. Subgroups are only accessible to entitled users, providing them with a tool which facilitates planning meetings and follow-ups;
- **Thematic Networks**: online spaces where Platform members can discuss thematic issues besides subgroups. Thematic networks are accessible to all Platform members. All users are invited to share information that could be relevant for the conversation.

It will be your responsibility to choose where you post your content. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any of the content or the documents that users have posted under the designated networks.

The official communication language of the digital network will be **English**. No other language shall be used. However, users may publish documents or links to websites in other languages than English, provided that they offer an explanation of the content and reason for publishing in the official communication language of the Tool.

## Moderator

The G2 – Animal Health and Welfare Unit in DG Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) ensures the moderation of the Platform's Tool. The moderator grants access to the Tool and removes users who break the Terms and Conditions set out throughout this document. The moderator is also responsible for deleting inappropriate contents posted by users (please, see the "Inappropriate Content" paragraph below).

## Users

The EU Platform on animal welfare is composed by 75 members representing the different stakeholders involved in the field of animal welfare: public institutions, international organisations, businesses, NGOs and independent experts. You can check the Platform members at this page.

The use of the EU Platform on animal welfare Tool is therefore restricted to the following kinds of users:

- European Commission staff;
- Members of the EU Platform on animal welfare;
- Additional experts designated by their member organisation to participate in specific subgroups, but who are not permanent members of the Platform as such;
- Observers (Switzerland)

## Username and Password

In order to register on the Tool, users have to first create an account in the European Commission Authentication Service (EU Login). Users can find comprehensive and thorough guidelines on how to create their EU Login account by carefully reading this User Guide (pdf file). Should you have any questions regarding the creation of an EU Login account, please read the EU Login help and EU Login Privacy Statement.

Please be aware that only a personalised email address related to your organisation is authorised by the European Commission Authentication Service (EU Login) for the purpose of registering an organisation in the Platform's digital network e.g.: firstname.lastname@organisation.xx or f.lastname@NGO_name.xx (or other possible combinations). Users will not be able to access the Tool with e-mail addresses which are general or related to a functional mailbox. To ensure transparency, usernames on the web platform are

created automatically to include the name of the person and the organisation for which the user works.

Following their registration on EU Login, Platform members or invited participants will be granted access to the Tool by DG SANTE moderators, after verifying compliance of the applicants according to the previously mentioned criteria. Users will receive automatic e-mail(s) with access link(s) to the digital network.

Users are responsible for safeguarding their passwords and for any activities, actions or posting resulting from their access to the Tool. The European Commission encourages using complex passwords e.g. with lower and upper cases, numbers and symbols to avoid any possible fraud.

The European Commission cannot be held liable for any damage resulting from the loss of your username or password.

## How to use the Tool

The scope of the Tool is providing the Platform with an instrument which aims at facilitating communication and sharing knowledge between the Platform members. Therefore, users should commit themselves to work collaboratively as well as in an orderly fashion.

The Tool is meant to be an instrument for stakeholders to keep collaborating as well as continuing discussions in-between meetings of the EU Platform on animal welfare. Users are therefore strongly recommended to be proactive.

### First access

To access the digital tool and start working on the Tool, users should click on the button "Access/request access to My network". Users should be provided with EU Login credentials when logging in to the Tool (please, see "Username and Password" above). On their first access, users will be required to qualify themselves by choosing the status that best suits them as regards three different information fields (Country, Name, Type).

Once logged on, users will land on the networks page, where they will be able to work collaboratively on the Agora or ask for access to further working areas, such as Subgroups.

In the event of problems occurring when logging in, please contact SANTE-ANIMAL-WELFARE-PLATFORM@ec.europa.eu.

## Agora

The **Agora** should be used as a free space of discussion for both general and specific matters. Always remember that all members of the Platform are free to access the Agora.

The Agora is composed of 6 tools:

- **All contents,** where users can browse all items hosted on the Agora, be they documents, pictures, events or polls. Contents are displayed from the most recent to the oldest;
- **Events,** where users can create events on a shared calendar;
- **Library,** where documents are stored inside a structured folders list;
- **News,** where users can freely publish posts, including pictures, attachments, events, links and polls;
- **Search,** an instrument which allows users to find a specific content within the Agora, by providing key-words;
- **FAQ,** where users can find replies to the most frequent asked questions on how to use the tool, from posting news to uploading documents on the Library.

In order to maintain order within the Tool, an organised Library has been created so that documents can be correctly stored and easily traceable at a later stage. It is users' responsibility to add their inputs in the correct folder.

The main distinction in Agora's folders list is between:

1. **General issues:** you can upload here documents that may be of some interest to all users of the Tool. Under this folder, you can find the following subfolders:

   - **Labelling;**
   - **Reference Centres,** reserved to the EU Commission, where information, data and scientific results from the EU Reference Centres shall be shared with stakeholders;
   - **Platform on animal welfare,** where users shall discuss over topics related to the organisation of the Platform;
   - **Legal issues.**

2. **General science**:  folder where you can upload and find scientific papers on animal welfare' general principles.

3. **Specific issues:** you can upload here documents that may be of some interest to all users, by reference to specific issues. Under this folder, you can find the following subfolders:

- **Transport (all species);**
- **Slaughter killing (all species);**
- **Pigs on farm;**
- **Poultry & rabbit on farm;**
- **Ruminants & Equidae on farm;**
- **Fur animals on farm;**
- **Fish on farm;**
- **Other species on farm;**
- **Pet animals.**

Further subfolders can be created under each one of the previous, especially with regards to legislation, scientific issues, socioeconomic issues, stakeholders' views and positions.

4. **International**: folder containing documents on animal welfare international issues.

5. **Communication and education**: general folder where you can upload and find documents such as educational materials.

Users are kindly required to carefully consider under which folder they publish their inputs. In order to guarantee order and traceability of contents, the moderator has the authority to move them under the appropriate folder, when needed, by notifying all users of such change. Inappropriate and misbehaving contents shall be removed by the moderator (please, see "Inappropriate Content" and "Abusive behaviour and spam" below) and may result in a suspension of the user's account.

The Library only supports Word documents, Pdf files and PowerPoint presentations. In News, users can upload pictures; create opinion polls, schedule events, share attachments and links.

## Subgroups

**Subgroups** shall be created upon mandate of the Platform only. They are provided with the same functionalities as the Agora.

Each subgroup is provided with its own Library, in order to ensure order and traceability of the contents. The folders of these Libraries closely follow the working fields of the subgroups.

The Animal Transport's Library consists of three folders:

- **Export cattle;**
- **Extreme temperature;**
- **Unweaned animals.**

The Welfare of Pigs' Library consists of two folders:

- **Methods for welfare assessment and improvement;**
- **Training on animal welfare**

Further subfolders could be created under each one of the previous.

As for the Agora, users are required to carefully consider under which folder they publish their inputs. In order to guarantee order, correctness and traceability of contents, the moderator shall act as exemplified for the Agora.

## Thematic Networks

Thematic Networks are created upon Platform members' demand to discuss on areas which are not specifically addressed by the EU legislation. The members of these Voluntary Initiatives are responsible of the management of these networks as well as any content published in it and within the Tool.

Just like the Agora, Subgroups and Thematic Networks are composed of 6 tools: **All contents**, **Events**, **Library**, **News** and **Search, FAQ**. Here again, Libraries only support Word documents, Pdf files and PowerPoint presentations. In News, users can upload pictures, create opinion polls, schedule events, share attachments and links.

## Functionalities

The following actions are available for the users of the Tool:

- Post news, updates or opinions on an issue, with documents, pictures and links;
- Add comments to other users' posts;
- Upload or download contents to and from the Libraries;
- Start new discussions;
- Create events;
- Create opinion polls;
- Share publications, documents or events;
- Like posts and comments;
- Report misbehaviour to the moderator.

## Your rights and duties as a user

Our goal is to provide a Tool to simplify communication between the Commission and Platform members, as well as to facilitate the on-going exchange of information, initiatives, news on animal welfare related topics and mutual learning between Platform members. This Tool will allow you to provide and receive content, as well as to put forward ideas and get feedback on them from other Platform members and/or from the European Commission.

Each user is responsible for the content published within the Tool. The European Commission respects the ownership of the content shared in it by the users. Users in turn have the responsibility to verify that they own the Intellectual Property Rights of the entire content when they publish it, or that they are aware of the permissions they need in order to share such content (e.g. creative commons licenses, photo databases etc.).

It is your duty to provide true and accurate information on the Tool regarding your organisation's profile and your content as a user. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for the dishonest behaviour of users.

## Expected behaviour of Users

As a user of the Tool you are expected to behave as follows:

- Treat all other users of the Tool in a respectful and courteous manner at all times, even in the event of disagreements;

- Users should not pretend to be administrators, coordinators or moderators by using "Administrator", "Coordinator", "Editor" or "Moderator" in their username or profile;
- In the event of a disagreement, the European Commission will make the final decision;
- Sales products, such as priced publications, shall not be uploaded on the digital network.

## Abusive behaviour and spam

The European Commission strives to protect its users from abuse and spam. User abuse and technical abuse will not be tolerated on the Tool and may result in a suspension of the account. Accounts that carry out the following may be suspended:

- Creation of multiple accounts per user. The moderator(s) of the Tool will create an account for each of the organisation's permanent representatives to the EU Platform on animal welfare. In the event that one organisation has several permanent representatives to the Platform, each of them shall receive a personal user account. To avoid confusion, no user can submit to the moderator a second email address in order to create a second account for himself/herself.
- Abusive behaviour to a specific target. You are not allowed to engage in targeted abuse or harassment, such as targeting a specific organisation to attack its reputation or content in an impolite way; attacks on one specific individual in order to give offence to his/her reputation and/or honour, expressing disrespectful comments, threats, insults, or attacks.
- Malware (Malicious Software)/Phishing. You are not allowed to publish links to malicious content intended to damage or disrupt another users' browser or computer or compromising the Privacy Statement.
- Graphic content. You are not allowed to use pornographic or groundlessly violent and graphic images in your posting, profile or any other kind of publication.
- Spam. You are not allowed to use the Tool to spam anyone. What constitutes "spamming" evolves as the European Commission deals with new tactics and tricks of spammers. Users may use the "report" function available under each publication in order to notify the digital network's moderator, who will then take any appropriate actions. Actions that are considered spam include:

    1. Posting numerous publications with the same copied text;
    2. Creating misleading or false content in a regular way;
    3. Posting links repeatedly without any written update or information on the links;
    4. Creating misleading accounts or content;

5. Promoting third party content with clear promotional purposes and with no aim to enhance discussion and engagement;
6. Posting repeatedly general information in the thematic networks that are focused on one single topic to disrupt or damage the conversation.

## Inappropriate Content

The following are deemed to constitute inappropriate content. Posting such content may result in account suspension or banning, as well as the removal of the offending posts:

- Posts or images of a defamatory, abusive, vulgar, hateful, harassing, obscene, profane, racist or threatening nature. This includes any messages or material ethnically, racially, religiously or sexually offensive, insulting or demeaning. All content posted by users express the personal views of their author(s), and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any offending message, comment, post, image or other material posted on the site;

- Posts/ images that violate any laws or regulations, including intellectual property rights;

- Advertising of products or services for commercial use. You can talk about you or your organisation's initiatives to start a discussion or share knowledge that you may have gathered. Registering solely to promote yourself, your company or others could eventually lead to the user removal from the site;

- Discussions over illegal activities;

- Discussions of personal nature that are not related to animal welfare issues;

- Discussions over the suspension of a Platform's user or any disciplinary action that might be taken by the European Commission following the rules and procedures explicitly stated throughout this document;

- Posting other people's personal contact information (i.e. telephone numbers, addresses, etc.) on the network without their prior and formal consent;

- Any content that contains viruses, Trojan horses, or the like, or other computer programming routines that may damage or interfere with the website;

- Any other content deemed inappropriate by the European Commission, e.g. holiday pictures, the sharing of plans for the weekend, any non-work-related subjects;

- Links to any of the above.

# Legal Notice

Please have a look at the legal notice.

# Personal Data Protection

Please have a look at the Data Protection Notification.

# Specific Privacy Statement

Please have a look at the Specific Privacy Statement.

# Copyright Notice

© European Union, 2018.
Reuse of content is authorised, provided the source is acknowledged and provided that the user does not distort the original meaning or message of the material. The reuse policy of the European Commission is implemented by a Commission Decision of 12 December 2011.

The European Commission accepts no responsibility or liability for any consequence stemming from the reuse.

# Intellectual property rights

Users posting and uploading materials to the Tool declare to have the ownership or the right to use and to share the contents in the web platform.

Please note that in the case of content that incorporates third party materials, you are responsible for obtaining prior and formal authorisation and acknowledgment of the sources e.g. photos, charts, tables etc. integrated in this document from other rights holders. As a user, bear in mind that there might be other third parties' rights in the photos (e.g. architects may claim their copyright to depicted original architectural works; the same applies to visual artists in relation to their artworks).

Persons clearly identifiable in photographs hold the rights to their own image and have to give their consent to its publication. Be sure you have all the necessary authorisations from the depicted persons.

On a case-by-case basis and having the prior approval of the concerned users, the Commission can be granted a royalty free licence to use, reproduce as well as to communicate and make available to the public the materials published under the Tool.

Users are encouraged to include a copyright notice for the contents uploaded. In case of contents incorporating third party materials, the relevant copyright holders should be clearly identified. In case of joint authorship by representatives of multiple organisations in the same document, the copyright is held jointly by all of them, therefore please list all organisations involved. You may also want to designate and indicate the person users could contact to ask for permissions.

In accordance with the Commission Decision of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents, reuse is allowed for all the European Commission documents provided that the source is acknowledged, the document is not for internal use of the Platform only and the user does not distort the original meaning or message of the material. This regime does not apply to third party contents. In those cases, reuse requires specific permission unless stated otherwise. Users are encouraged to indicate the re-use conditions for their contents.

The European Union does not take any responsibility for any infringements of intellectual property rights that may be caused by contents uploaded or posted by users that are not members of the EU staff.

If you believe that your copyright or related rights have been infringed, we invite you to contact us at SANTE-ANIMAL-WELFARE-PLATFORM@ec.europa.eu.

## Suggestions of acceptable content

- Keep all contributions within the appropriate area of interest. If the content is of a general nature, post it in the Agora;

- Use short, clear and concise titles when posting documents or publications;

- Please share content on behalf of your organisation and not on behalf of the European Commission. The content published by third party users (i.e. non-European Commission users) will always be independent of the European Commission's views and positions.

# Reporting inappropriate behaviour

All the content posted can be reported by users of the Tool to the European Commission. Please do so if you believe that a publication violates any of the conditions of the Platform.

If you wish to report a user's continuous misbehaviour, spamming or inappropriate content, please write to SANTE-ANIMAL-WELFARE-PLATFORM@ec.europa.eu explaining the reason for reporting. The moderator of the Tool will review your request and take appropriate action.

Impersonation: you are not allowed to impersonate other users or any other organisation to mislead, confuse or deceive others or damage their reputation. If you think a user is impersonating another, please inform the European CommissionSANTE-ANIMAL-WELFARE-PLATFORM@ec.europa.eu.

The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any impersonation, abuse or misbehaviour. However, it reserves the right to take appropriate measures to stop such behaviours.


# Monitoring of the site and disciplinary measures

The European Commission reserves the right to monitor the Tool, including the networks, subgroups, discussions and any other content or section and remove any posting and/or users who do not comply with the Terms and Conditions stated throughout this document, the legal notice provided on the Tool and the Privacy Statement. This would include posts that disrupt or interfere with our technical operations.

The European Commission retains the right to close or ban, temporarily or permanently, any users' account if need be. The user will be notified and informed of the reasons and measures taken.

Should you feel that you have been treated unfairly by the moderators, you may address your concern to the European Commission via SANTE-ANIMAL-WELFARE-PLATFORM@ec.europa.eu and we will carefully review your request. When contacting us, please provide the email used to register in the Tool.

No discussion over the suspension of a user or any disciplinary action will be held with the general public.

# Disclaimers and limitations of liability

1. Links from the Digital Tool of the EU Platform on animal welfare to external websites

The Tool may provide links to many European Institutions and other sites that are relevant to the Commission's work. This is why you must be aware of the following rules:

- If you access another website through a link provided through the Tool, you are subject to the privacy policy of that site;
- The European Commission is not responsible for the contents of any pages referred to from its website. Linking to other websites should not be taken as an endorsement of any kind by the European Commission.

2. Links from external websites to the Digital Tool of the EU Platform on animal welfare website

The European Commission is not responsible for the contents of any external pages that users may post on the Tool.

# Termination of Digital Tool usage

You have the right to terminate your participation in the Tool and delete your account. In order to do so, please contact SANTE-ANIMAL-WELFARE-PLATFORM@ec.europa.eu and state the reason for your request and our moderator(s) will take the appropriate action.

# Conclusion

While these rules cover most common situations, they cannot anticipate everything.

Consequently the European Commission reserves the right to take any further actions needed to ensure that the functioning of the Tool is not disrupted or abused in any way.

The European Commission reserves the right to immediately suspend your account, without any further notice, if you repeatedly do not respect the Terms and Conditions of the Tool mentioned throughout this document.

We may revise these Terms and Conditions regularly. The most updated version will always be found under the "Digital Tool Structure" tab on the landing page. We reserve the right to update this document without previous notice. It is therefore your duty to regularly check the Terms and Conditions that rule the Tool.

## Any questions?

Please feel free to write an email to [SANTE-ANIMAL-WELFARE-PLATFORM@ec.europa.eu](mailto:SANTE-ANIMAL-WELFARE-PLATFORM@ec.europa.eu).