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Third African Animal Welfare Conference, September 2-4, 2019

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2nd to 4th
September
2019

Conference Venue:

**United Nations Economic Commission
For Africa - Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.**

**Sep 13, 2019 Third African Animal Welfare Conference, September
2-4, 2019**

By Kathleen Rowan

The Third African Animal Welfare Conference took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the beginning of September (the first two were held in Kenya in 2017 and 2018). There were over 200 attendees drawn from all regions of Africa and from eight non-African countries. As in the previous two conferences, the lead entity organizing the conference was the African Network for Animal Welfare (ANAW), a Kenyan NGO established in 2006. Apart from South Africa, Egypt, Morocco and a few East African countries, animal advocacy presence in African countries has been very limited until recently.

The meeting took place on the campus of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). The development of animal welfare advocacy on the continent was evidenced by the fact that, of the 75 speakers, all but a handful were either born in Africa or were living and working on the continent. Both the United Nations Environment (UNEP – headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya) and the African Union InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR – also headquartered in Nairobi) were well represented on the program. UNEP signed a two-year agreement with ANAW in 2018 that included a stipulation that ANAW should organize animal welfare conferences in 2018 and 2019. At the 2019 conference, it was announced that the agreement between UNEP and ANAW has been extended for a further three years. [The next African Animal Welfare Conference will be held in Ghana in 2020.]

AU-IBAR first became actively involved in animal welfare towards the end of 2015 when they held the First Consultative Stakeholders Conference on Animal Welfare. Twenty-seven African states were represented, and the decision was made at the event to establish the African Platform for Animal Welfare to coordinate various government initiatives and activities on animal welfare. The Coordination Committee of the African Platform for Animal Welfare was formally established on 27 April 2018 at a meeting attended by representatives of 41 African Union member states.

While national, regional and international government organizations are now paying attention to animal welfare in Africa, an animal welfare civil society presence is also growing across Africa. South Africa has long had strong animal welfare advocacy, spearheaded by the National SPCA. The Kenya SPCA also has a long history but there are now numerous smaller groups springing up across the continent. To date, ANAW (located in Kenya but with a presence across the continent) is the most successful new group but there were representatives of a number of other organizations at the conference, including individuals from Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Nigeria, Egypt, and Morocco. There are also efforts underway to establish a continent-wide animal welfare organization (along the lines of Asia for Animals). It is clear that animal welfare advocacy is growing across the continent and that it is now widely supported by local advocates and not just by ex-pats from the northern hemisphere.

Please refer to Dr. Rowan's presentation on "[Linking SDGs & Animal Welfare: A Global Perspective](#)" at the Third African Animal Welfare conference.