

# *Animal welfare bill being revised in Cuba*

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Havana, December 16 (RHC)-- An animal welfare bill is in consultation for possible passage in Cuba. It provides for citizens' rights and duties toward animals, as well as punitive measures for those who do not care for and protect them.

María Gloria Vidal Rivalta, president of the National Committee of Animal Welfare of Cuba, told a press conference on Monday that the draft is currently under review by the legal department of the Ministry of Agriculture, and is a priority issue for that body.

The proposal, which includes domestic animals, aquatic animals, work animals, animals for education, sports activities, and those used in biomedical research, establishes the way people should act towards them, based on technical and scientific criteria.

It stipulates sanctions for those who do not comply with the regulations. Although Vidal did not provide specific details, she stated that the penalties include high fines and, in particular cases, even deprivation of liberty.

The document recognizes the principles of animal welfare, which include the right to attention, care, and protection that none of them be subjected to ill-treatment or cruel acts. If death is necessary, it must be instantaneous, painless, and without generating anguish.

She added that every animal that man has chosen as a companion has the right to have its life span in accordance with its natural longevity, and abandonment is considered a cruel and degrading act.

The draft legislation explicitly prohibits fights or clashes between all existing species. It also regulates the marketing of live animals, requesting people who perform the marketing to have a license.

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