

WSPA Statement

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

I have followed the fine work of the ISDR for many years and wish to recognize the leadership of Dr. Salvano Briceno, without whom the effort would have failed long ago. One must also recognize the leadership of the Government of Japan for their support of this initiative as well as the presence in our audience of Dr. James Devine of the US Geological Survey. Jim was one of the founders of the International Decade on Natural Disaster Reduction, a true giant.

Mr. Chairman, WSPA is the world's largest federation of animal welfare bodies, with over 850 member societies throughout the world. This is important to the delegates because of the one billion poorest people in the world; 850 million depend totally on animals for a living, for food, even security and labor.

Without their animals, many of these very poor would starve or enter a terrible new spiral of poverty, so animal welfare should be seen as a core element of humanitarian relief and development.

Natural disasters, and especially those related to seismic events and climate change are a real problem for the animals in question, who are often on the open range. Mudslides, earthquakes, fires and floods are also all major risks to poultry and livestock of all kinds, and therefore protecting these animals, whether on farms or in pastoral settings is a humanitarian issue involving food security, hunger and the prevention of the spread of disease.

Experts from the IFRC, FAP, UNHCR, UNESCO, OCHA, ISDR, OIE and OECD have joined in a working group to explore better policies to reduce risks to these animals from disasters. The group known as the IWGAID or Paris Group (The International Working Group on Animals in Disasters) is co chaired by UNESCO and WSPA.

Fellow delegates and Mr. Chairman, you are invited to join in a discussion on the work of the Paris Group tomorrow in Room 14 from 2:30 to 4:15. We also ask that the Global Platform consider animal welfare in its future deliberations within the context of poverty, hunger and disease.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.