Animal welfare survey

Please check the appropriate answer and feel free to provide additional comments to explain your party's position on this issue.

The commercial wildlife trade

The use and trade of wild animals and products made from them has taken place for centuries, however the exponential growth in this trade[i] is one of the top two direct drivers of biodiversity decline.[ii] The trade is also responsible for the spread of invasive species[iii], zoonotic disease outbreaks,[iv] and declines in soil fertility, food security, habitat integrity and climate stability.[v] This in turn impacts human health and our economy, both of which heavily rely on healthy and intact ecosystems. Canada imports, exports, breeds, and trades millions of live wild animals and their derivatives annually and has been identified as a wildlife trade hotspot.[vi] No one knows exactly how many individual animals or which species are traded because the legal and illegal trade are largely unmonitored and lack traceability.[vii] Canada does not have a comprehensive or reliable system for collecting data on important aspects of the legal and illegal wildlife trade. Currently the Nature Intelligence System (NIS), is under development by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). This system allows for analyzing digital and paper wildlife shipment documents and can identify inconsistencies and questionable shipments of wildlife and their products. However, it lacks funding for a comprehensive rollout, despite public support. A 2024 Nanos poll[viii] found that 81% of Canadians support or somewhat support federal funding for more stringent tracking and monitoring of Canada's commercial wildlife trade; and 82% of Canadians support or somewhat support increasing the number of field enforcement officers.

Canada also has commitments under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on Biodiversity and its Global Biodiversity Framework (Target 5), Sustainable Development Goals (Goals 1, 2, 4 & 15) and WHO Pandemic Agreement negotiations to address unsustainable legal and illegal wildlife trade. Canadians largely support stronger laws to reduce the commercial trade in wild animals to reduce animal welfare, environmental and health risks, with 84% expressing support or somewhat support.[viii]

1. Would your party fund the national rollout of the Nature Intelligence System – estimated to cost $500K in its first year and $1 million annually in subsequent years – to increase efficiencies at Canada's borders to detect and curb the illegal and unsustainable legal import and export of wild animal species?

    ☐ Yes
    ☐ No
    Additional comments

2. Would your party support stronger laws to reduce the commercial trade in wild animals to reduce animal welfare, environmental and health risks?

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   Additional comments:

3. Would your party support increasing the number of enforcement officers to crack down on the illegal wildlife trade and improve monitoring of the legal trade?

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   Additional comments:

The use of wildlife for entertainment

In June 2019, Canada passed legislation to ban the breeding, display and trade of whales, dolphins and porpoises for entertainment. However, there are no other provisions at a national level restricting the use of other species of wildlife that similarly suffer for entertainment. In 2020, the late former Senator Murray Sinclair introduced the Jane Goodall Act to end the captivity of great apes and elephants. In 2022, that bill was reintroduced and expanded by Senator Marty Klyne to include protection for more than 800 species, receiving widespread support from animal welfare organizations and Canada's top zoos. When efforts to pass this bill were stalled in the Senate, Senator Marc Gold introduced Bill S-15 on behalf of Minister of Environment, Steven Guilbeault. While the unlikely alliance of animal welfare groups and Canada's top zoos still supported Bill S-15, we were disappointed that the "Noah's Clause" was removed which would have allowed more species to be added for legislative protection in the future if science-based animal welfare criteria were met. With the Prorogation of Parliament, Bill S-15 has now been terminated.

4. Would your party support legislation to protect elephants, great apes and big cats and/or other wild animal species from exploitation for public entertainment?

   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   Additional comments:

Intensive animal agriculture

Climate change

There is compelling scientific evidence to support a shift away from a high animal protein diet to one that is primarily plant-based for reasons of public health, environment, and animal welfare. Navius Research found that

a 50% reduction in animal food consumed in Canada would reduce Canada's emissions by 16% (13.5 Mt) by 2030, enough for Canada to meet its climate targets. This approach would cost 11% less than the other available options.[ix] Animal agriculture accounts for about 10% of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions and is Canada's most emissions-intensive sector.[x] Canada's agricultural emissions have grown significantly, mostly from farmed animals, exceeding all other sectors except oil and gas, and Canada's Environmental Commissioner recently called out Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada for not having a meaningful climate strategy, having met less than 2% of its emissions reduction target.[xi]

5. Would your party support initiatives to increase consumption of plant-based foods, as recommended by Canada's Food Guide and other experts?

    ☐ Yes
    ☐ No
    Additional comments:

6. Would your party support requiring federal institutions and programs like the National School Food program to procure more plant-based foods, in line with Canada's Food Guide recommendations?

    ☐ Yes
    ☐ No
    Additional comments:

7. Would your party support increasing investments in the Protein Industries Cluster to meet the growing demand for plant-based proteins and facilitate growth, innovation and competitiveness of Canadian farmers?

    ☐ Yes
    ☐ No
    Additional comments:

8. Would your party commit to financial incentives to encourage and support small to midsized family famers to transition away from intensive farming practices and towards more humane and sustainable, low carbon, climate-resilient farming practices (including plant-based agriculture)?

    ☐ Yes
    ☐ No
    Additional comments:

9. Would your party support implementing an emissions cap on agriculture to reduce emissions from the sector and to encourage a shift to more plant-based agriculture?

    Yes
    No
    Additional comments:

Antimicrobial resistance

Almost ¾ of antibiotics in Canada are used in farm animals, most often to prevent disease in healthy animals rather than treat illness. This overuse fuels antimicrobial resistance (AMR), identified by the World Health Organization as a significant public health threat. In 2018, approximately 26% of infections were resistant to the drugs generally used to treat them, costing the Canadian healthcare system $1.4 billion per year. This is estimated to increase to $7.6 billion per year in 2050 when resistant infections are project to reach 40%, unless swift action is taken to tackle this problem.[xii]

Our report, "Reducing antibiotic use in farming through improvements to animal welfare" highlights the low welfare practices common to intensive agriculture that are associated with high antibiotic use.[6] Adopting better animal welfare practices can minimize stress and illness in animals, reducing the need for prophylactic antibiotics. Canada's *Pan-Canadian Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance* is a positive step, but further action is needed to address the root causes in farming practices. Quebec's policy of forbidding Category 1 antimicrobials for preventative purposes in food animals is a good starting point but stronger policy to restrict all prophylactic use is needed to protect both human and animal health.[xiii] Prophylactic antibiotic use has been banned in the European Union as of 2022.[xiv]

10. Would your party support phasing-out the prophylactic use of antibiotics in animal farming alongside the necessary animal welfare improvements on farms?

☐ Yes
☐ No
Additional comments:

Farming disasters

The past decade has demonstrated the vulnerability of animal agriculture to climate change through droughts, extreme heat, fires, and floods. The 2021 floods in Abbotsford, BC resulted in the largest agricultural disaster and animal welfare crisis in the province's history. The high concentration of animals due to intensive animal agriculture in the region, amplified the scale and severity of the disaster.

11. Would you mandate that animals be included in disaster preparedness, response and risk reduction strategies?

☐ Yes
☐ No
Additional comments:

[i] [The direct drivers of recent global anthropogenic biodiversity loss](#) (Jaureguiberry et al., 2022)

[ii] E.g., [Scientists' warning to humanity on illegal or unsustainable wildlife trade](#) (Cardoso et al., 2024); [Invasiveness is linked to greater commercial success in the global pet trade](#) (Gippet et al., 2021)

[iii] E.g., [CITES and the Zoonotic Disease Content in International Wildlife Trade](#) (Borsky et al., 2020); [Mammals, wildlife trade, and the next global pandemic](#) (Shivaprakash et al., 2021)

[iv] Mustoe, S. (2022). *Wildlife in the balance: Why animals are humanity's best hope.* Wildiaries.

[v] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2351989423003773

[vi] E.g., [International trade in amphibians: a customs perspective](#) (Gerson, 2012); [Analysis of Canada's wildlife imports and zoonotic disease risk](#) (Hamers et al., 2023); [Canada's role in global wildlife trade](#) (Boratto et al., 2024).

[vii] https://www.state.gov/2024-end-wildlife-trafficking-report/#:~:text=The%20Eliminate%2C%20Neutralize%2C%20and%20Disrupt%20(END)%20Wildlife%20Trafficking,and%20Countries%20of%20Concern%2C%20as

[viii] National survey conducted by Nanos for World Animal Protection, October 2024. Nanos conducted an RDD dual frame (land- and cell-lines) hybrid telephone and online random survey of 1,058 Canadians, 18 years of age or older, between September 29th and October 2nd, 2024, as part of an omnibus survey. The margin of error for this survey is ±3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

[ix] [How plant-based policies could cut emissions | World Animal Protection](#)

[x] [Calculating emissions intensity across the economy](#)

[xi] [Report 5—Agriculture and Climate Change Mitigation—Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada](#)

[xii] [AMR One-Pager](#)

[xiii] Quebec's policy: *Bylaw 1.1. Administration, for curative use, of a medication belonging to the category of very high importance antimicrobials to an animal that will be used (or from which products will be used) as human food is restricted to clinical cases that are not treatable with an antimicrobial of a lower importance category based on, for example, a culture and susceptibility testing.Bylaw 1.2. It is forbidden to administer for a preventive purpose a medication that belongs to the category of very high importance antimicrobials to an animal that will be used (or from which products will be used) as human food.*

[xiv] [Microsoft Word - 2022 changes to European law - farm antibiotics](#)