

## A voice for working equids

The Working Animals Alliance (WAA) under the auspices of World Horse Welfare and The Donkey Sanctuary introduces a new era of influence to protect working equids.

### This Alliance aims to:

- Provide a global voice for working animals.
- Emphasise contributions working animals make in coping with the current climate change crisis.
- Deliver mutual benefits for members by providing a voice for working animals and a system for countries to ease their implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Co-host events at relevant intergovernmental meetings.
- Create a set of targets to measure the impact that working animals have in delivering the SDGs, and identification of gaps in the research on the role of working animals and relevant solutions to address such issues.

### Publicity

Dissemination of information and influence will be achieved through newsletters at relevant events highlighting the role of working animals, and by promotion of the role of working animals in the media.

Podcasts will be produced to target the relevant media, also highlighting the role of officials in member states. Radio programmes on working animals will be produced in collaboration with the UN Department of Global Communication and the Rome-based agencies.

WAA will create an informal group of stakeholders to collectively work towards achieving better conditions for working equids.



Donkey and foal with herders in Lesotho. Image: World Horse Welfare

## DONKEYS PLAY A ROLE IN SAVING OUR PLANET

### Measuring Sustainable Development progress

Voluntary National Reviews aim at recording and monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. WAA will advise countries when they report progress in their Voluntary National Reviews.

### Disaster preparedness

Protection of working animals is a key consideration within plans for disaster preparedness and recovery. They are often their owners' most valuable asset thus also the largest expense when they need to be replaced.

### Climate change

Strong working animals can play a crucial role in building resilience. Donkeys and mules, in particular, are suited to arid zones and support livelihoods in adapting to climate change. Animal traction is gradually being acknowledged as a solution to decrease the excessive reliance on industrialised agriculture, as well as a valid method to reduce carbon emissions. Governments need to recognise working animal welfare and its impact on people's lives in national policies and legislative frameworks.

### More INFORMATION about WAA in our website library

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OR, Jessica Stark, Director of Communications and Public Affairs at World Horse Welfare: [jessicastark@worldhorsewelfare.org](mailto:jessicastark@worldhorsewelfare.org)

WORKING ANIMALS ALLIANCE TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE, PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES AND ACHIEVE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

WORKING ANIMALS, CLIMATE CHANGE, HEALTH CRISES AND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS



# Animals (also) need lawyers

Donkeys for Africa did a survey throughout Africa asking whether there were laws in place protecting animal welfare. The answers ranged from yes, to not well enforced, to none at all.

Here are two organisations that address this issue:

## Animal Law Reform South Africa (ALRSA)

[www.animallawreform.org](http://www.animallawreform.org)

Contact: [amywilson@animallawreform.org](mailto:amywilson@animallawreform.org)

Animal Law Reform South Africa envisages a society whose laws, courts and enforcement agencies advance the protection and well-being of humans and non-human animals. It believes that justice is enhanced where legal protection is available to all sentient beings and that human rights are enriched – not impoverished – by including animals in the notion of justice.

The co-founders and directors of the board of ALRSA are Amy P. Wilson and Professors David Bilchitz and Bonita Meyersfeld. Amy is an attorney from South Africa with a Master's Degree in Animal Law from Lewis & Clark Law School in Portland, Oregon. Bonita Meyersfeld is a Human Rights Lawyer and an associate professor at Wits Law School. David Bilchitz is a Professor of Fundamental Rights and Constitutional Law at the University of Johannesburg.

The organisation is open to approach by all stakeholders ranging from animal rights, welfare and protection organisations to the government. ALRSA takes a collaborative and not isolative approach provided the issues fall within their mission and goals.

## Animals as property

Legally, animals are considered as property in most countries. This has led to wide scale abuse because of this status and the vested interests that humans have in animals, also economically. However, Courts in South Africa have made a number of positive statements regarding animals and their status, indicating that they are sentient beings and elevating the welfare and protection of non-human animals to a constitutional concern.

## Change

ALRSA focusses on key areas that can bring about change.

1. Legislative and Policy Reform
2. Litigation and Legal Services
3. Education and Research

Amy reports that she has worked on submissions relating to the Meat Safety Act in South Africa where the submission includes provisions relating to donkeys.

She comments that “working animals, particularly donkeys fall within an unusual category. In South Africa donkeys are protected by the Animals Protection Act though, so they do have the benefit of that.” She adds that she posted about the donkey skin trade on ALRSA Social Media and did some preliminary research and has informed the SA government about this.

## Lawyers for Animal Protection in Africa (LAPA)

[www.lapa.africa](http://www.lapa.africa)

Directors are Amy P. Wilson and Jim Karani. They envisage an Africa where animals are respected and protected in the legal system. “We wish to make animal law accessible and create a continent-wide network of interested persons and a platform for protection efforts to materialise into real change. This includes changing the hearts, minds and laws to protect the interests and advance the well-being of animals in Africa.”

## LAPA has three key pillars

1. **Advocacy**, which includes strategic litigation, utilising different areas of the law and creating positive precedent
2. **Education**, focussing on lawyers, but including all relevant stakeholders
3. **Research** and consultancy, providing support and advice including with governments, industry, animal organisations, individuals, corporates and others in order to achieve their mission.

## Killer of Gorilla jailed for 11 Years

The killer of one of Uganda's best known mountain gorillas, Rafiki, has been jailed for 11 years. Felix Byamukama pleaded guilty to illegally entering a protected area and killing a gorilla in claimed self-defence. The Uganda Wildlife Authority said “Rafiki has received justice.”  
BBC



Hopefully this will provide some precedent to protect donkeys who are being butchered for their skins.



## What is Animal Law?

A webinar on this was presented by Animal Law Reform South Africa (ALRSA). The speaker was Prof Joyce Tischler. Animal law is an extremely broad, vibrant field, with no universal definition. It considers the interests and issues of the animals themselves: whether companion animals, wild animals, in entertainment, scientific research, farmed, aquatic, etc. Prof Tischler highlighted the gap between the market value of companion animals and their value to the owner, which is far more than market value.

Watch at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-9AANSOJyE&fbclid=IwAR3laQosQC2NE0ERAds6DS1NMVtPYEGP8mKCH5IA679gYm\\_PsAtPB011Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-9AANSOJyE&fbclid=IwAR3laQosQC2NE0ERAds6DS1NMVtPYEGP8mKCH5IA679gYm_PsAtPB011Q)



# Zambezi Working Donkey Project

“Working donkeys in Zambia provide a lifeline for people who use them to create a living. It is a harsh life for these animals, with poverty and lack of knowledge about donkeys resulting in suffering through neglect and injury.”

Email: [zambeziworkingdonkeyproject@gmail.com](mailto:zambeziworkingdonkeyproject@gmail.com)

Website: [www.zambeziworkingdonkeyproject.org](http://www.zambeziworkingdonkeyproject.org)

Facebook: [zambeziworkingdonkeyproject](https://www.facebook.com/zambeziworkingdonkeyproject)

**Based in Livingstone, Zambia,** ZWDP aims to improve the lives of working donkeys, and support their owners, by:

- Educating, enabling & empowering owners to properly train and care for their donkeys,
- Providing community-based education and training to use appropriate harnesses and carts,
- Rescuing and rehabilitating donkeys in need of short or long-term care.

## The Problem

Knowledge of proper care of donkeys is scant. Heavy hardwood yokes designed for use with oxen are common, which cause painful and debilitating wounds in donkeys.

The biggest challenges are the complete lack of knowledge or empathy for animals. Added to this is the perception that a donkey is not worth very much – as soon as it is too sick or broken to work it is sold for cheap meat, or to the donkey skins trade which is emerging in Southern Province.

## Solutions

Education for all ages is critical. Traditional leaders and communities are eager to be involved in improving conditions.

An initiative to train Community Livestock Officers is planned. They will provide on-the-ground education and support for donkey owners to try and change the mindset from within, as well as providing vital communication links between rural villages and ZWDP.

## Progress

The outreach programme to rural villages in Livingstone and Kazungula Districts has already improved the lives of many donkeys. The wooden yokes are removed, new harnesses are made and the carts are modified, removing weight and making them easier to pull.

Farmers are advised on correct loading while wounds, skin parasites, deworming and hoof care receive constant attention.

## Mobile Clinic

A grant by Animal Aid Abroad will help to fund our Mobile Clinic. A registered government Veterinary Assistant assists at outreaches and Mobile Clinics, and qualified Veterinarians get involved with more complicated cases.

## Further goals are:

- Expand the community outreach program and train 24 Community Livestock Officers for evaluating and teaching farmers to care for their donkeys. To ensure best practices for carts & harnesses.
- Partner with other organisations to educate owners and the youth on sustainable farming, drought planning, income diversification, environmental protection & reforestation.
- Establish a drop-in Workshop & Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre to treat injured donkeys and provide a retirement home for those donkeys too old or sick to work.
- Implement a new Harness and Cart Design (funded by Vets Without Borders) to take all weight off donkeys’ necks.
- Reach more women farmers to ensure gender equality.
- Hold outreach school visits.



*Providing (and educating about) the right feed for donkeys.  
Rescuing a little one. (The Carer seems to think “and there I thought I could have the apple all by myself...”)  
Right: An example of the unsuitable harnesses often used, with the new replacement demonstrated below.*

# The Donkey Sanctuary Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund (CERF)

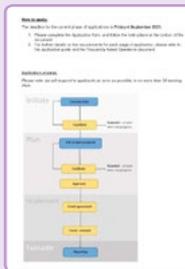
CERF aims to support working donkey and mule owners in Africa, Asia and the Americas who are struggling because of the coronavirus. TDS aims to support the animal welfare and development sector by seeking proposals that demonstrate a positive impact on the welfare needs of working donkeys.

For further assistance, please contact Sophie Neller at: [sophie.neller@thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk](mailto:sophie.neller@thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk)

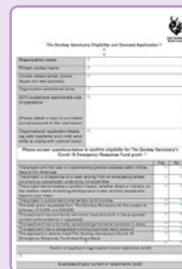
## TO APPLY

If your donkey welfare organisation requires funding, go to the DfA library at [www.donkeysforafrica.org/library.html](http://www.donkeysforafrica.org/library.html) where you will find the following documents for submission to TDS:

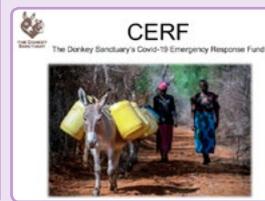
- **CERF Information** .pdf guide file about the eligibility criteria, framework & FAQ.
- **CERF Application** .word template to fill in the required information.
- **CERF Presentation** .pptx file for presentation purposes.



CERF.pdf



CERF.word



CERF.pptx

## Get help with harnessing

Chris Garrett provides regular advice about harnessing on the DfA Facebook page. Follow and share this important training information.



For the working animals of the world

## Shut down the donkey skin trade

After the Kenyan government's decision to close its four donkey abattoirs, working animal charity Spana has called for all countries to outlaw the devastating trade in donkey skins and associated products. Let us keep up the pressure to have this massacre of donkeys stopped.

## THE RELEVANCE OF WORKING ANIMALS TO CLIMATE CHANGE

World Horse Welfare and The Donkey Sanctuary hosted a virtual side event at the United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) titled Working Animals: Climate Change and Public Health Issues in achieving the SDGs. Roly Owers, CEO of World Horse Welfare, introduced the event by noting "The policies relating to the health and welfare of working animals really is relevant to climate, the health of people, the health of animals and the health of the environment".



WATCH at [www.youtube.com/user/horsecharity](http://www.youtube.com/user/horsecharity)

Melbourne and International Livestock Research Institute showed that existing welfare challenges for working animals and livestock will continue and will be exacerbated by climate change. She went on to present examples of how working animals are contributing to achieving SDGs.

Talking about the trade in donkey skins, Ian Cawsey, Director of Advocacy &

Daniela Battaglia, of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, introduced the importance of a 'One Health' approach: "Recognizing the connection between humans, animals, plants and their shared environments in an integrated effort to reduce disease and pest threats and ensure safe food supply." Rebecca Doyle from University of

Campaigns at The Donkey Sanctuary pointed out various risks attached to the skins trade. "These skins are transported across the world with little sanitation. Not only are communities deprived of the working donkeys they need, but it also poses a biosecurity risk which we should all be concerned about".

## From the editor

Covid-19 presents numerous challenges but also opportunities. Many projects are on hold due to financial or travel restrictions. On the other hand the option to present webinars in place of physical gatherings for conferences has enabled many more participants to benefit. It seems that every conceivable topic and planned conference is now available on-line for those of us who have reliable internet connection.

There is still a lot happening "out there" with opportunities to reflect, learn, plan and network while we may be waiting to get back to hands-on support for our core commitment: donkeys and their welfare. We always value your feedback on the articles we feature.

Stay in touch, stay safe and keep caring about donkeys.

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