

First of all I will congratulate Norecopa with the 10 years anniversary!

Norecopa as a consensus platform plays an important role in seeking dialogue between those involved in the use of animals for scientific purposes;

- Academia,
- Industry,
- Animal Welfare organisations and
- Government and regulatory authorities

We appreciate this arena that now exists where it is possible to seek solutions acceptable to all parties in a friendly manner.

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority is responsible for the proper implementation and enforcement of animal welfare rules.

I would particularly like to emphasize the importance we place on animal welfare and the high priority it is given. It is apparent to us that Norwegian citizens are aware of animal welfare issues and are increasingly concerned about the way animals are treated. I believe also that this fact will not alter in the near future.

In this context, I would like to highlight that there have been recent changes to the legislation that concern the welfare of animals used for scientific purposes.

Firstly, the 3R principle was more strongly embedded in the Norwegian Animal welfare Act of 2009. Secondly, the new EU directive 2010/63 has now been implemented in Norwegian legislation. As a result, the Norwegian Food Safety Authority is more strongly involved with the welfare of these animals and plays a more prominent role in enforcement.

In general, many of the procedures performed on animals for scientific purposes would not be permitted. Through legislation, these procedures are permitted in research facilities under specific conditions.

It is important for NFSA that the research procedures on animals are performed in accordance with the rules and that those involved are competent and knowledgeable and use the 3R principles.

One of Norecopa's main tasks is to ensure and disseminate information on 3Rs.

In these 10 years Norecopa has done exactly that.

I cannot mention all Norecopa has done, but the renewal of the website and introduction of the search engine 3Rguide are invaluable in this respect.

They have had special focus on those species that are particularly common in Norwegian research, fish, but also on those species that are unique, wildlife.

I also notice that Norecopa does not restrict itself to Norway and has played a role internationally as well.

I would like to commend Norecopa for its good governance and the dedication it has shown in its work and especially Norecopa's Secretary Adrian Smith for his work. His experience and knowledge of animals in research is vast and this knowledge has been used well and tirelessly to achieve progress.

I am sure that the tools I have mentioned and others introduced by Norecopa will help the research facilities to apply the 3Rs.

They will also facilitate the proper application of legal requirements which is one of the aspects the Norwegian Food Safety Authority is concerned about.