

Camelid Welfare Annex

Global Rangelands Standard V0.2

This annex provides species-specific animal welfare requirements for camelids and should be applied alongside Principle 6: Animal Welfare of the Global Rangelands Standard. In this Version 0.2, the normative requirements apply specifically to camels. Requirements for other camelid species will be developed as sufficient technical review, evidence and consultation are completed.

Interim basis for COP17: The requirements below draw primarily on the camel-relevant welfare requirements considered through the SFA Camel Wool Standard consultation in Mongolia, supplemented by additional material on camel handling and slaughter. Their inclusion within the Camelid Welfare Annex should not be interpreted as extending camel-specific thresholds or practices to other camelid species.

SECTION A: CAMELS

Theme 6.1 – Animal health and disease prevention

No additional camel-specific requirements under this theme

Theme 6.2 – Nutrition and access to water

No additional camel-specific requirements under this theme

Theme 6.3 – Humane handling, living conditions and husbandry

Minimum requirements

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| C6.3.1 | Camels are not mated before four years of age. |
| C6.3.2 | Routine castration of camels is not carried out before three years of age. The core Principle 6 requirements on justification and pain minimisation for husbandry procedures continue to apply. |
| C6.3.3 | Newborn camel calves receive adequate colostrum within 24 hours of birth and begin suckling within two hours. Where a calf is unable to suckle adequately, appropriate assistance, manual feeding or fostering is provided. |

- C6.3.4 Camel calves are not fully weaned before at least one year of age unless earlier weaning is necessary for a justified health or welfare reason.
- C6.3.5 Camel fibre collected by combing or hand harvesting is removed only once it has begun to shed naturally. Where camels are shorn, timing is appropriate to local weather conditions and the animal's stage of fibre growth.
- C6.3.6 Where camels are laid down or have their legs tied for fibre harvesting, restraint is applied in a way that does not restrict breathing or circulation or cause avoidable pain or injury, and the animal is continuously supervised and released promptly when harvesting is complete.
- C6.3.7 Fibre harvesting is timed and managed so that recently harvested camels are not exposed to foreseeable cold stress. Where necessary, harvesting is delayed or suitable shelter or covering is provided.
- C6.3.8 Hot iron branding is not permitted.

Improvement requirements

- C6.3.9 Camels are gradually habituated to fibre harvesting and associated handling from an appropriate age.
- C6.3.10 Injuries associated with camel fibre harvesting are recorded and reviewed, and harvesting practices are adjusted where injuries or repeated signs of distress occur.

Theme 6.4 – Responsible veterinary treatment and medicines

No additional camel-specific requirements under this theme

Theme 6.5 – Humane transport and slaughter

Minimum requirements

- C6.5.1 Camels in the last two months of gestation, and camel calves whose umbilical cord has not healed, are not transported unless transport is necessary to obtain veterinary care.
- C6.5.2 Where camels are transported in vehicles, sufficient headroom and space are provided for the transport posture used so that animals are not forced into positions that cause avoidable injury or distress, including contact of the head with the vehicle roof.
- C6.5.3 Cutting or severing the Achilles tendon, or using any other injurious procedure to immobilise a conscious camelid for slaughter, is prohibited.

Camel Guidance

Camel husbandry practices vary according to production system, climate, season and mobility. In extensive pastoral systems, welfare should be assessed with regard to normal camel behaviour and locally appropriate management practices.

Particular considerations include:

- **Calving:** Female camels may separate themselves from the herd to give birth. Appropriate calving conditions therefore do not necessarily require separate housing or confinement. Animals should be monitored sufficiently to identify difficulties and provide assistance where needed.
- **Social management:** Camels should generally have opportunities for social contact and bonding. Temporary separation may occur in connection with breeding, milking or calving, provided this does not result in avoidable distress.
- **Water:** Camel water requirements and normal watering patterns differ from those of many other livestock species. Assessment of adequate water provision should consider climate, forage, physiological state and access to water. In the Mongolian consultation, grazing camels were reported to be watered every two to three days, while milked females were watered daily.
- **Lying areas:** Where camels are housed or confined, they should have access to a suitable and comfortable lying surface. Soft ground is identified by pastoralists as a preferred lying surface.
- **Fibre harvesting:** Timing should follow natural shedding and weather conditions rather than fixed calendar dates. Restraint may include tying and laying camels down, but should not impede circulation or cause avoidable pain or injury. Camels should be progressively habituated to fibre harvesting, and protection from cold should be provided where needed after fibre removal.
- **Handling and restraint:** Camels may be particularly sensitive to unfamiliar noise, separation and physical restraint. Handling should minimise fear and distress and use the minimum force necessary. Where animals are handled in facilities, flooring should provide adequate grip and handling practices should avoid inappropriate restraint, including lifting or pulling animals by sensitive body parts.

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