



INTERNATIONAL ANTI-BULLFIGHTING NETWORK

REPORT OF THE 15th SUMMIT

25 and 26 November 2023

Rivas Vaciamadrid, Spain

Includes list of members

Report written by Estefanía Pampín Zuidmeer, CAS International

The Summit 2023 was made possible thanks to the financial support of:

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Day 1

Opening of the Summit

Maite van Gerwen gives a special welcome to the participants of the summit in Rivas Vaciamadrid.

Current situation of bullfighting worldwide

Estefanía Pampín Zuidmeer presented the current situation of bullfighting worldwide. Once again, the sector is losing ground. Resistance to bullfighting continues to grow and interest in bullfighting is declining. In 2022, four capitals did not hold any bullfights: Mexico City, Bogota, Quito and Caracas. Estefanía also commented on the results of the municipal, autonomous and general elections in Spain and the consequences for the bullfighting sector. Spain also has a new government with a Minister of Culture who has publicly declared himself against bullfighting.

In our cause not only arguments based on animal rights are important, but also children's rights and human rights are increasingly relevant issues. For example, in 2024 Spain will have to submit a document to the UN in which it explains what steps it has taken to protect children from the violence of bullfighting.

Advances in animal protection in Spain. Challenges and achievements

Sergio García Torres gave a presentation on the most important advances on the subject of animal protection in Spain. Sergio explained what has been done by the Directorate of Animal Rights (Ministry of Social Rights and Agenda 2030) on the issue of bullfighting. An attempt has been made to add measures on the entry and participation of minors in bullfights in the Childhood Law, which was blocked, as the PSOE did not want to continue with the law if it contained such measures. In the end they were eliminated and the Childhood Law was approved without them.

The Directorate of Animal Rights has also dealt with the issue of the financing of bullfighting spectacles and the protection of people in relation to the broadcasting of these spectacles during children's TV watching time. They are no longer broadcast by Canal+, although they are broadcast by public television stations in the autonomous communities. This is an important income for the bullfighting sector.

Apart from these two lines of work (childhood and financing), an attempt has been made to include the subject about bullfighting in the Law for the Protection and Welfare of Animals. In the end, as with the Childhood Law, they were not included, because the law would not move forward.

What was achieved was the inclusion of bullfighting in the Disability Law. In 2023 the Bombero Torero - an event where people with achondroplasia are the center of ridicule - has been banned. Now the government can help the people that made a living from Bombero Torero in finding a new job.

What Sergio sees as an important focal point in the fight against bullfighting in Spain, is to move towards the elimination of the cultural protection of bullfighting. This could be achieved through a citizens' initiative or by presenting the issue directly to politics. In this case the law cannot be repealed by the government, but the proposal has to be treated by the parliament. Better option is to present it through a citizens' initiative. This gives a clear message from society and also offers the possibility of a prolonged campaign with a lot of media attention. To be dealt with in politics would only give two or

three days of debate. With the citizen's initiative, this debate can be extended for many months.

Cruel Fiestas

Aïda Gascón presents the campaign 'Fiestas Cruelles' (Cruel Fiestas), which focuses on the fiestas/festivals with bulls in Spain. For this campaign, 9,000 Spanish municipalities have been contacted to find out if they have bull fiestas.

One of the conclusions of the campaign is that the main livelihood of the bullfighting sector is the fiestas - the renting and purchase of bulls, cows and calves. More cows than bulls are used in the bullfighting sector, a fact unknown to the public.

Of all the municipalities contacted for research only half have responded. However, it gives enough information to draw conclusions. 1820 municipalities organize and finance bull fiestas. Companies take care of the organization of the bull fiestas, it is a business. The municipalities contribute with 42 million of public money (which is an estimation). The average population of the municipalities per event is 1,000 inhabitants; these are very small municipalities.

The results obtained have been gathered on the website www.fiestascruelles.org. Everyone has access to these results. Through a map you can see all the information per municipality, such as the number of bull fiestas, type of events, subsidies, dates, etc.

Regarding bullfights, it is not clear what is the total amount of subsidies they receive. No research work has ever been done on this subject.

The bullfights are paid by public administrations, they are cheaper than the fiestas. As the bulls for the fiestas are rented it is not possible to know how many animals are used in total. The bulls are used for four or five years, the cows are used even longer, sometimes up to 12 years.

Aïda also informs us about the situation in Catalonia, a bill was registered last year, by two political parties. The objective is to prohibit the most cruel of the popular festivities with bulls: the toro embolado (fire bull), the toro ensogado (bull on a rope) and the toro a la mar/playa (bull in the sea/beach) - these types of festivities have not been organized for the last five years. The proposed law has already been passed to be processed.

There will be a presentation from supporters and opponents. Afterwards, the political parties will have to take a position. The supporters of bull fiestas have presented an endless list of appearances (400 in total, they will end up being about 125), so everything is going to take a long time to be processed. The normal number of appearances is 24 to 30. The presentation of so many appearances is a trap so that the bill cannot be voted on time.

We cannot rely on the priorities of the political parties and therefore the citizens must take the reins, presenting for example a citizens' initiative in Catalonia. Polls show that citizens are in favor and a citizens' initiative could generate a lot of attention to this subject through the media.

Bullfighting and religion

Roger Lahana explains the relationship between bullfighting and Catholicism. This relationship begins with the name 'The Catholic Kings of Spain', which is an honorary title granted by Pope Alexander VI in 1496 to the Queen of Castile Isabella I and her husband, the King of Aragón Ferdinand II. With them begins the history of bullfighting, an activity that was exported to Latin America by the conquistadors.

It is said that bullfights are a cult of Mary. Nowadays, some bullfights are blessed during masses in bullrings (in Spain but also in other countries with a mostly Catholic culture). And most bullrings have a chapel reserved for bullfighters.

The Italian San Francesco d'Assisi (1181-1226) (St. Francis of Assisi) considered all living beings to be God's creatures, which includes animals. In 1567 Pope Pius V banned bullfighting (Encyclical De salute gregis dominici). But the following Pope Gregory lifted the ban on bullfighting - although clerics were not allowed to attend them.

The current Pope Francis declared in 2015: "Any cruelty to any creature is contrary to human dignity." However, the same year he paid special attention to bullfighter Padilla in a general audience, without condemning the bullfighting practice. Unfortunately there has been no explicit condemnation of bullfighting since Pius V.

So far all attempts to obtain an explicit condemnation by Pope Francis have failed. Roger also comments that there are bullfighting priests (Jacques Tessier in France, and Victor Carrasco in Spain).

In other religions bullfighting is forbidden or incompatible: Islam, Judaism, Protestantism and Buddhism.

PETA is currently running a campaign on bullfighting and the Catholic Church. Teodora Zglimbea (PETA) invites the members of the Network to participate in this campaign, in a working group (CAS will inform the members by e-mail).

Keys to the anti-bullfighting fight

Marta Esteban Miñano discusses the most important keys that she has observed in her 13 years of fight for the end of bullfighting. One of the most important aspects is to understand the bullfighting lobby. Who is behind this lobby? In reality, the bullfighters are nothing more than puppets; the power is in the hands of the cattle breeders. The breeders have great economic power (for example Slim in Mexico). In Spain, some owners of bullfighting breeding farms have businesses in the world of communication, energy, real estate, food, tourism (hotels), gold, etc. They are families that have a lot of money and power. They are our main adversaries.

The breeding of fighting bulls gives them status. It can be a family inheritance. The breeders are also looking for subsidies, since breeding bulls does not create jobs. The truth is that they receive a lot of money in the form of subsidies. And possibly there is also a lot of money laundering.

What or who do these farmer families rely on? Mainly politicians, the media and celebrities. These families are also involved in hunting.

According to Marta, it is very important to expose these families. They are afraid that their image will be damaged and there is room to gain ground. For example on the issue of subsidies, crime and corruption related to bullfighting. The important thing is to inform and make the bullfighting public aware of the reality of these families, in order to get them to turn their backs on them and leave the bullrings empty. What we want to achieve is that people no longer want to associate themselves with these families that have so much power. For example, at the moment many celebrities do not dare to speak out against bullfighting for fear of no longer having a job.

The key is in transversality: we have to stop being animalists talking to animalists and start entering other movements (feminism, environmentalism, childhood, art, etc.) and try to raise awareness from these platforms.

On the website www.estolopagastu.info there is a lot of information about the relationship between subsidies, corruption and crime scandals, and bullfighting. We also need to expose this information abroad. Work the local from the global.

If the media do not want to help us and the public lacks information, then we create our own media. For example through the channel Animales con Derechos (Animals with Rights) or on Twitch. Social media is a very effective tool in our fight. For example Movistar no longer offers programming with bulls because of social media campaigns: Canal Toros was eliminated.

Study of the bullfighting argument after abolition

Carlos Crespo deals in his presentation with the bullfighting arguments after the abolition of bullfighting. The central question of his presentation is: Who are the people who make a living from bullfighting?

In Colombia, illegal bullfights are a big problem. They are related to money laundering. Sometimes in these bullfights there are only ten persons present. A lot remains invisible: we don't know how much these bullfights are worth. Also, the organizers are not paying taxes. At the same time they say that, if bullfights are banned, thousands of people will be left unemployed. But they do not make the figures public. So we will have to investigate and look for this information.

If we look at the economic activity codes of the Colombian tax and customs directorate DIAN (Dirección de Impuestos y Aduanas Nacionales) the profession of bullfighter is not mentioned. That is to say, it does not exist. Regarding the insurance and security system, bullfighters are not paid social security, as any worker should be.

The state does not have specific labor market statistics for X or Y profession or recognized job. So neither does it have them for the "bullfighting" population. The bullfighting population inflates the numbers of people who would be affected by an eventual prohibition of bullfighting activity, including people who are not involved in these events and who do not necessarily require bullfighting activity to develop their economic work, such as hotels, restaurants and informal vendors.

The people who carry out some type of direct work in bullfights or their derivations are the cattle breeders, businessmen, bullfighters and their subalterns (picadores, banderilleros, among others) and direct workers in the bullrings.

UNDETOC (The Union of Bullfighters of Colombia) also does not have figures referring to the Ministry of Labor.

Carlos did some research through the website www.mundotoro.com. There you can see a list of all the bullfighters who have participated in a bullfight in Colombia (2012-2023). It shows that in this period 222 bullfighters or novilleros in Colombia have made at least one bullfight. The bullfighters who participated the most in bullfights in this period in Colombia, Luis Bolívar and Sebastián Vargas, made 63 and 57 bullfights respectively. However, of those 222 bullfighters or novilleros, only 40 of them participated in 10 or more bullfights or novilladas (18.01%). Of these 40 bullfighters or novilleros, 10 are international and the remaining 30 are nationals (Colombians), so the percentage of bullfighters or novilleros who participated in 10 or more bullfights or novilladas in these 10 years is actually 13.51%.

81% of the 222 bullfighters have had participation in less than 10 bullfights between 2012 and 2023, not one each year.

The conclusion of this research is that bullfighting in Colombia is a sporadic activity, so no person derives their main economic livelihood from it. The end of bullfighting will not cause trauma to the bullfighting sector.

The importance of the law in the fight against bullfighting

Arturo Berlanga gives us a presentation on the importance of law in the fight against bullfighting. He explains that law (all legal systems without exception) is 100% anthropocentric. It is based on Roman law. Until now, animals are considered by law mainly as things. Applying the law to animals is complex, since animals are exploited, violated and slaughtered under the protection of the law.

In the 70s, 80s and 90s of the 20th century, wild animals were the first to be considered as subjects of protection (animals inserted in their ecosystems, such as the polar bear). While society began to feel indignation about the mistreatment of dogs and cats, it began to consider animal abuse as a crime. In this century, animal protection or welfare laws began to emerge (also for livestock and caged animals). Concern also arose for human health in the face of the massive presence of animals on farms. In the second decade of the 21st century, the concept of sentient beings began to be included in legal systems, and they began to cease to be things.

Argentina is 10 years ahead of the rest of Latin America. There is a recognition of animals as persons. It is only based on a sentence about one animal, but this kind of sentences are important in law, even if it is only about an individual. Now this case works as a precedent.

In all countries where there is bullfighting, there is legal schizophrenia. That is to say, some animals are protected while others are not. Bullfighting is legalized violence. It is exempted as an act of animal cruelty and mistreatment. In some cases it has legal protection or consideration as cultural heritage. And it benefits from public resources.

There are some tools that can help us to change the legal status of bullfighting:

- Citizen's initiatives or citizen referendums (which are binding).
- Judges, Tribunals, Courts

From the movement we have to get closer to the legal world. The United Nations, for example, signed a binding treaty for the protection of minors, which serves as an instrument in cases where minors are not protected.

Comparative law can also help us: it is the use of cases from other countries as an example in the legal argument.

Emergency slaughter in Spain

Maite van Gerwen informs us about a complaint that CAS has filed at the European Commission. In the Spanish regulations the slaughter of bulls in the bullring, in popular festivals and in bullfighting schools is considered as emergency slaughter. This Spanish regulation is an incorrect application of the norms of the European Union, which allows the bullfighting sector to abuse the norms destined for production animals. In this way, in the European Union, the meat of fighting bulls can be marketed with risks to food safety.

Maite explains in detail the relevant European regulations and European laws related to this issue: the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Regulation (EC) 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter and Regulation (EC) 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down specific hygiene

rules for food of animal origin. It is also important what the Spanish Royal Decree mentions about emergency slaughter and fighting bulls.

After her analysis Maite concludes that during the bullfighting spectacle no accident occurs that would justify an emergency slaughter, outside the slaughterhouse, which implies a limitation of the regulations in terms of hygiene and food safety. The slaughter of the bull outside the slaughterhouse is also not carried out with the animal's welfare in mind. Furthermore, the slaughter of the bull during bullfights and popular festivities is not an emergency slaughter.

The relaxations that Spain has implemented, including the omission of ante mortem inspection, are not allowed by EU legislation. Spanish regulations do not comply with European legislation on food hygiene and safety. Therefore, Spanish regulations should be modified to comply with European legislation. To achieve this modification, CAS has filed a complaint at the European Commission, which should initiate an infringement procedure against Spain as a non-compliant country, imposing economic sanctions and forcing it to comply with EU legislation.

The complaint will not mean the end of bullfighting, but at least it will guarantee that bullfighters will not be able to profit from everything.

Day 2

The use of social networks in our fight against bullfighting

Carmen Patricia explains how social networks can be used in the most effective way in our fight against bullfighting. It all starts with a good communication strategy to be able to achieve a greater success. It is essential to use social networks to reach the public: something that does not appear in social media is like it does not exist.

Platform X is where trends are formed and are seen by many, many people. That's why it is attractive for politicians to broadcast their activities on X. For us it is also an important way to spread and make our message visible. We must also take into account that having paid accounts will make us more visible.

To have a good strategy in X it is crucial to give it time. It can save us money. There is a website that can help us to visualize the economic impact of the campaign through the hashtags that are used: www.tweetbinder.com.

The use of Facebook for our campaigns has become complicated, as it is more difficult to spread our message: it is little used and gives little visibility. We need to understand how the algorithm works in order to use this medium to our advantage. Likes and comments at this time have no impact on visibility. What is crucial at this moment is that our message is shared, because in this way the algorithm 'understands' that something is relevant. That is why it is important to ask our followers to share our posts.

Carmen offers to help anyone within the Network in the elaboration of campaigns and in the use of social media.

European Elections

Maite van Gerwen explains the most relevant points related to the European elections 2024. Between June 6 and 9, European citizens will be able to vote.

Between April 23 and June 6 is the time for campaigning. Maite thinks it is important to lobby with the aim of banning bullfighting, to ensure that animal welfare rules also apply to fighting bulls and to revise the CAP (common agricultural policy) to prevent agricultural subsidies from reaching fighting bull breeders. In her presentation she explains the steps that organizations can take to create their electoral campaign.

Maite also proposes a public survey to be carried out by IPSOS in the three European countries where bullfighting exists. The objective would be to know what people think about bullfighting and popular bull festivals, and if they want them to be banned. It is also relevant to know which political party the interviewees vote for.

Also from the Eurogroup for Animals there will be a manifesto. This does not focus on bullfighting but we can connect it to a web campaign with a manifesto on bullfighting. It is important to get from the candidates a promise to work towards the end of bullfighting in which they agree to put their name, party and photo on the website, etc.

RIA Website

Maite van Gerwen and Estefanía Pampín show the members present at the summit the new website of the International Anti-Bullfighting Network. They also ask for help from the members to work together on it in a working group. An e-mail will be sent after the summit to form this working group.

Network Principles

Maite van Gerwen presents the comments that have been sent by the members on the Network principles and the Code of Commitment. On some comments there are doubts. During the summit these points will be discussed. After the summit a proposal with several options for the principles and the code of commitment will be sent by e-mail. The idea is that the members vote on these points.

Action points

- Create a Communication Group
- Create a working group for the website
- Create a working group on religion and bullfighting.

List of participants of the Summit 2023

<u>Country</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Name(s)</u>
Colombia	AnimaNaturalis Colombia	Derly Johana Flores Cruz
Colombia	Defenzoores	Jennifer Rincón
Colombia	REN	Carlos Crespo Carrillo
Ecuador	FATA	María Belén Bedón Cueva
Spain	ANDA	Encarna Carretero
Spain	AnimaNaturalis España	Aïda Gascón Bosch
Spain	AnimaNaturalis España	Cristina Ibáñez
Spain	Fundación de Ayuda a los Animales	Marta Esteban Miñano
Spain	LTNEC	Alessandro Zara Ferrante
Spain	LTNEC	Sergio García Torres
Mexico	AnimaNaturalis México	Arturo Berlanga
Mexico	Movimiento Consciencia	Elideth Fernández Villegas
The Netherlands	CAS International	Maite van Gerwen
The Netherlands	CAS International	Estefania Pampin Zuidmeer
Peru	Acho Sin Toros	Carmen Patricia Pajuelo Almonacid
Portugal	ANIMAL	Rita Silva
Portugal	MATP	Alice Almeida

UK	PETA UK	Teodora Zglimbea
Venezuela	ASOGUAU	Kimberly Galindo Rada
Venezuela	RAC. Red de Apoyo Canino	Mariant Lameda Utrera