UK animals are dying for a deadline, says animal welfare charity

Thursday 15 July, 2021

The Home Office has today, 15th July 2021, released its 'Annual Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain' for 2020. In 2020, 2.88 million procedures were completed on living animals in Great Britain. Whilst this is a decrease of 15% from the previous year, and a similar number of procedures to 2004, it may be explained by the two national coronavirus pandemic lockdowns during 2020. The lockdowns would have affected the activity at establishments due to the strict limits on daily life and restrictions on travelling to places of work.

With the pandemic restricting workplaces throughout much of 2020, the statistics still make grim reading and include 2,066,635 procedures on mice, 311,055 on zebrafish, 208,610 on rats, 50,954 on sheep , 10,790 on horses and equids, 11,336 on rabbits, 6,057 on Guinea pigs, 3,320 on pigs and 4,340 dogs, including 4,270 beagles.

According to the statistics, of the 1,700 primates used for the first time in experimental procedures in 2020, all marmosets, tamarins and rhesus monkeys were born in the UK at a licensed establishment, whereas 98% of cynomolgus monkeys were born in either Africa or Asia. The statistics do not include whether the cynomolgus monkeys were born in captive breeding facilities or captured in the wild.

In response to these statistics, animal welfare charity Naturewatch Foundation is urging the UK Government **to commit to a deadline to end animal experiments in the UK.** With Government plans recently published, increasing government spending to £22 billion for "scientific research of all kinds", Naturewatch Foundation is asking for the government's funding investment to be directed to non-animal technologies. The charity has launched a 'Call Time on Animal Testing' campaign aimed at members of the public who are eager to see the end of animal testing.

Commenting on the number of animals used in British science in 2020, Naturewatch Foundation Campaign Manager, Sarah Carr, said:

"With every year that passes, our country is missing countless opportunities to end enormous suffering and save millions of lives. The innocent animals subjected to scientific procedures in laboratories around the country are more than just numbers. These are sentient animals who experience feelings, including pain. Science has moved on from abusing innocent, sentient beings. There is huge growth in groundbreaking non-animal approaches, computer and other in-vitro techniques which are more humane and are often quicker and cheaper than methods using animals.

The government has announced increased funding in scientific research – we want to see that investment directed to world-leading animal free research. The Government has committed to a deadline in combatting climate change – laboratory animals are dying for a deadline too."

Since 2014, the degrees of pain, distress, suffering or lasting harm felt by animals in procedures have also been recorded in the Home Office report. The levels include 'mild', such as an MRI scan with appropriate sedation or taking a blood sample, to 'severe', like inescapable electric shock treatments and toxicity testing where, sadly, death is the final stage.

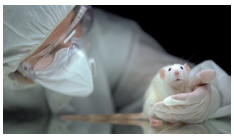
Although every year the UK Government publishes basic data about how many animals have been abused and how many procedures the poor captive animals have endured, there was nothing about what they have experienced. Secrecy still surrounds what actually goes on in animal testing labs, as it is against the law (**Section 24** of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986) to disclose the actual details of animal experiments. Sarah Carr continued:

"The Government talks about transparency and openness, but innocent sentient animals are suffering and dying unnecessarily and the statistics are hardly changing. Seven years ago, the Government conducted a consultation into Section 24 and we are still waiting for a Government response!"

- In **2010**, the UK Government committed to the replacement, reduction, and refinement (3Rs) of the use of animals in research.
- In **2014**, it set out its plan 'Working to reduce the use of animals in scientific research'.
- In **2015**, it published a 'Delivery Report' to assess progress against the plan, followed by a roadmap in the UK up until 2030.

Media:

naturewatch foundation
ADVANCING ANIMAL WELFARE





Related Sectors:

Charities & non-profits :: Environment & Nature :: Farming & Animals :: Government :: Medical & Pharmaceutical ::

Related Keywords:

Animal Experiments :: Animal Testing :: Animals :: Cruelty ::

Scan Me:

There has been **no further publicly available update** to the Government's roadmap to replacement, reduction, and refinement (3Rs) of the use of animals in research since 2015.

According to the 2020 statistics, there were 153 establishment licences, with 3,024 project licences in force. Ten establishments did not have any active project licences and 81% of establishments were universities and medical schools. In response to the coronavirus pandemic, restrictions imposed strict limits on daily life. This meant activity at establishments will have been affected. No extra data was collected in relation to the pandemic on its effect on the establishments.

Naturewatch Foundation has launched a public campaign, enabling people to contact the Ministers responsible for animal testing policy and regulation. The campaign is accessed via their website naturewatch.org

END

More Information

Annual Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain 2020:

Statistics of scientific procedures on living animals, Great Britain 2019:

Public opinion regarding animal experiments in the UK is reviewed in Government funded research:

For further information please contact:

Sarah Carr

Campaign Manager, Naturewatch Foundation

Sarah@naturewatch.org

+44 (0) 1242 252871

www.naturewatch.org

About Naturewatch Foundation

Naturewatch Foundation is a registered charity that has been speaking out on behalf of animals for 30 years by:

- Campaigning peacefully against animal abuse
- Lobbying to improve animal protection legislation
- Raising awareness through education
- Supporting the World Animal Day movement to raise the status of animals around the globe

www.naturewatch.org

Company Contact:

Naturewatch Foundation

T. +44 (0)1242 252871
E. info@naturewatch.org
W. https://www.naturewatch.org

Additional Contact(s):
Sarah Carr, CEO
sarah@naturewatch.org

View Online

Additional Assets:

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.naturewatch-foundation.pressat.co.uk