Montreal, August 19, 2021

Melissa Matlow

Campaign Director for Canada World Animal Protection

Ms. Matlow,

First, please excuse the delayed response on our behalf. We decided to answer questionnaires related to the current electoral campaign only after its launch.

However, as you certainly know, in December 2015, Quebec unanimously passed the *Animal Welfare and Safety Act* which recognizes animals as sentient beings that have biological needs. This act outlines care requirements as well as prohibited behaviours toward animals. In doing so, Quebec has taken a great leap forward, joining countries at the forefront of animal rights protection, such as France and other European countries.

The Bloc Québécois endorses Quebec's vision, which lays the groundwork for future improvements in animal rights. Although we are in favour of Canada protecting animals, we do not need Canada to assert our values and to push forward our rights.

The Bloc Québécois supports the global fight against environmental crime. The joint effort between INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization has led to the seizure of specimens or products derived from endangered species.

Furthermore, the Quebec government already works toward analyzing and preventing the risk of climate-related infectious diseases. The *Institut national de santé publique du Québec* monitors zoonoses such as Lyme disease. Quebec's Multi-Party Observatory on Zoonoses and Adaptation to Climate Change follows the development of zoonoses and puts forward concrete preventative and adaptive measures.

In Quebec, the Regulation respecting animals in captivity "outlines the condition surrounding the capture and importation of animals, the rules and

conditions for keeping them in captivity and selling and disposing of them" (translated from the French).

The federal government's Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act "aims to carry out the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) through the implementation of rules regarding the international and interprovincial trade of certain endangered species" (translated from the French).1

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), wildlife "is the source of more than 70% of all emerging infectious diseases in humans, many of which are caused by new viruses" (translated from the French). In April 2021, the WHO recommended that the sale of live wild mammals be halted.

The Bloc Québécois is favourable to reinforcing the regulations that aim to reduce health risks and ensure animal well-being if the legislative will and jurisdiction are respected.

When the laws or federal regulations are compatible or congruent with Quebec laws and the provincial legislative intent, the Bloc Québécois is open to policy harmonization agreements. We oppose when the approach favoured by Ottawa is one where nationwide regulations are imposed. This practise usually counteracts or hinders the Quebec government's actions.

We staunchly defend Quebec's environmental sovereignty. Quebec laws apply throughout the province's territory, and the federal government should not be able to override them for projects under its authority.

Quebec farmers and growers care about the health and well-being of their animals. The *Animal Welfare and Safety Act* applies just as much to domestic animals as farm animals. Therefore, farm animals' biological needs must be considered and respected.

The Bloc Québécois is committed to promoting organic and sustainable agriculture. The bacteria that resists antibiotics can be transmitted from animal to human. Consequently, we must aim for farming practises which do not use antibiotics as a preventative measure and which do not use any growth hormones.

¹ Lois et règlements applicables | Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (gouv.qc.ca)

When it comes to reduced meat consumption in Quebecois' and Canadians' diet, the Bloc Québécois believes it is a question of each individual's personal choice and values.

Finally, the Bloc Québécois vigorously defends Quebec's agricultural model and fights for increased support, mainly through the Agricultural Policy Framework, to retain the human aspect of our agriculture. Quebec farmers have known for a long time about the importance of protecting the environment and of the added value created by offering top-quality products—especially by keeping in mind the welfare of their animals and the quality of their resources. Whether it is favouring greener heating systems, promoting organic agriculture or even supporting short channels for local purchasing, the Bloc Québécois will continuously support local farmers and processors to live according to the model we chose.

Thank you for your interest in the current electoral campaign.