



29 January 2025

To: Anup Jagwani

cc: Carolina Hoyos Liévano; Esra Diker-Yilmaz; Louis Philippe Mousseau

Please reply to:  
Peter Stevenson OBE  
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Compassion in World Farming

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Dear Anup

**IFC investment to support the expansion of Higest Ltda. in Mozambique: [Project nr. 41386](#)**

We are concerned that the IFC Board has approved the proposed investment in the expansion of Higest Ltda. in Mozambique ([project nr. 41386](#)).

While we understand that food security in the Africa region is a crucial issue that must be urgently addressed, we believe investing in the expansion of industrial animal farming is not a viable solution. Industrial animal agriculture is [a resource-intensive production model](#), which the IFC is planning to finance in a country where resources - mostly energy and water - are [either lacking](#) (also [here](#)) or are [the cause of ongoing and long-term conflicts](#).

Now that the project has been approved by the IFC Board, we ask IFC to take the following into account as regards both Higest and its out-growers:

- Ensure that the requirements of its own Good Practice Note (GPN) on Improving Animal Welfare in Livestock Operations are put in place.
- Require the use of slower-growing breeds of chickens to reduce the problems of painful lameness, poor walking ability, and physiological/metabolic disorders such as ascites and sudden death syndrome. These problems are recognised by IFC's GPN which states: 'in broiler chickens, genetic selection and manipulation for fast growth has led to high rates of leg disorders, acute and chronic pain, abnormal gait, respiratory infections, acute death syndrome, and other significant welfare issues'.
- Avoid high stocking densities, which lead to welfare issues including poor walking ability, reduced behavioural freedom, poor litter quality and heat stress. Here too these problems are recognised by the IFC GPN which points to the welfare risks of 'high stocking densities in groups increasing the potential for disease transmission and injurious contact with others'.

- Housing must provide good ventilation and insulation and clean, dry litter. It must also provide enrichment including natural light, perches and objects for chickens to peck at.
- Use upright catching supporting the body and wings, holding both legs, in dim lighting. See <https://www.eyesonanimals.com/wur-research-proves-upright-catching-significantly-reduces-catching-injuries> for details.
- For transport, use clean, undamaged crates which allow ventilation and which are designed to prevent any part of the bird from protruding in order to prevent injury. Sharp edges, hinges or latches should not project into the cage.
- Minimise journey duration - ideally less than 4 hours including loading and unloading. Use appropriate vehicles with temperature monitoring. Require careful driving by trained individuals.
- Require non-aversive gas stunning at slaughter and avoid the pain and distress caused to chickens by live shackling. Do not use the electric water bath for stunning.



A video from Higest shows broilers of the typical industrial breed selectively bred for a disproportionately large amount of breast muscle. This body conformation puts the chickens at risk of multiple welfare issues including painful lameness. One of the broilers in the foreground is panting rapidly, indicating risk of heat stress.

The text in the 'Environmental and Social Mitigation Measures' section of the IFC project documents still refers to 'animal welfare practices aligned with Global G.A.P standards'. The GlobalG.A.P scheme has not operated animal welfare standards for some time and we are

concerned that this defunct scheme is still used as a reference for animal welfare standards in an IFC-supported livestock project document.

Animal welfare should not be regarded as a peripheral consideration in the formulation of food and farming policy. Instead it should be accepted - together with food security, public health, the environment, climate change and farmers' livelihoods - as one of the core criteria in food and farming. IFC should not provide loans to projects involving livestock without requiring stringent animal welfare standards.

The focus on promoting industrial animal agriculture may mean that the benefits of well-managed agro-pastoralist, mixed crop-livestock and smallholder systems are overlooked and that these systems are unsupported and undermined.

We therefore request the IFC to place adequate consideration on preventing the potential harmful impacts on animals described above, and in future to consider possible alternative investments in less harmful food production systems.

We remain available for any questions or further discussions.

Kind regards

Compassion in World Farming, Peter Stevenson OBE, Chief Policy Advisor  
Sinergia Animal, Merel van der Mark, Animal Welfare and Finance Manager