

Director-General of WSPA Visits PANAFTOSA-PAHO/WHO

Rio of Janeiro, July 28, 2008 — Last week Peter Davies, Director-General of the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), made a visit to Brazil to get a closer, first-hand look at recent progress made in the area of animal welfare in the country. During his visit, he stopped by PANAFTOSA, the Regional Center of the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), which works in the area of animal health and diseases and food safety in the Americas.

The purpose of Mr. Davies' visit was to sign an important cooperation agreement between the WSPA and PAHO/WHO, aimed at promoting animal and human welfare. The agreement will enable joint activities in controlling dog and cat populations in Brazil, in addition to monitoring the eradication of animal diseases (zoonoses) in the country.

Dr. Albino Belotto, Director of PANAFTOSA, saw the outcome of this visit as very important, in that the agreement will establish new lines of cooperation and activities of extreme relevance. While promoting animal welfare, such actions will also help control problems affecting overall quality of life and assure the safety of foods of animal origin.

Over the past ten years, more than 75% of all diseases infecting humans was caused by infections from animals or animal products. Paying more attention to animal health can help prevent the development of these diseases, and thus their transmission to humans.

The WSPA and the PAHO/WHO agreed to work together to promote animal welfare; control canine and feline populations in Brazil; and monitor, prevent, control, and eradicate zoonoses in the country.

PANAFTOSA has been one of PAHO/WHO's techno-scientific centers since 1953. Its headquarters are located in the city of Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro state.

PAHO was established in 1902 and is the world's oldest public health organization. It works with the countries of the Americas to improve health and raise the quality of life of its inhabitants.

