

Press Release

23 February 2021

Dr Jane Goodall among over 140 scientists calling on EU to end cages in farming

An international group of scientists have sent a letter supporting a citizens' call to end the use of cages for farmed animals across the EU. Among them is ethologist and conservationist Jane Goodall, PhD, DBE, UN Messenger of Peace and founder of the Jane Goodall Institute. The letter calls on the European Commission to phase out the use of all cages in farming.

More than 140 scientists have sent a letter to the EU in support of the 'End the Cage Age' European Citizens' Initiative, which gained 1.4 million signatures, urging the EU to put an end to the use of cages in animal farming.

Dr Goodall, who is a vocal supporter of an end to the use of cages in animal farming, comments: *"Most people today understand that birds are sentient beings. We have kept hens rescued from factory farms – each had a distinct personality, all showed emotions such as pleasure and fear. A growing body of scientific research supports this, and there can be no doubt that life crammed into a small cage is causing great suffering. The EU needs to take action on behalf of the millions of hens and other animals treated in this cruel manner."*

Despite the EU Treaty's recognition of animals as sentient beings, over 300 million pigs, hens, rabbits, ducks and quail are confined in cages across Europe. Most cages are barren, cramped, and deny the animals space to move freely. Scientific research shows that cages have inherent severe disadvantages for animal welfare which the letter details. Moving away from cage farming, replaced by commercially viable alternatives, would bring about a seismic shift in our food and farming system with the potential to benefit hundreds of millions of animals a year.

Olga Kikou, Head of Compassion in World Farming EU, added: *"We are proud to have Dr Jane Goodall and all the other scientists on board to support an end to the use of cages in animal farming. The 'End the Cage Age' campaign has the backing of over 170 European organisations, dozens of Members of the European Parliament, the European Committee of the Regions and 1.4 million EU citizens. Animals in cages live miserable lives, and it is simply unacceptable. The European Commission must commit to legislation that will End the Cage Age for good."*

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Notes to Editors

1. Compassion in World Farming was founded in 1967 by a British dairy farmer who became horrified at the development of intensive factory farming. Today Compassion is the leading farm animal welfare organisation dedicated to ending factory farming and achieving humane and sustainable food. With headquarters in the UK, we have offices across Europe, in the US, China and South Africa.
2. To find out more about Compassion in World Farming visit: www.ciwf.org
3. The letter is addressed to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen; Vice-President Frans Timmermans, responsible for the European Green Deal; Commissioner Stella Kyriakides, responsible for health and food safety; and Commissioner Janusz Wojciechowski, responsible for agriculture and rural development.
4. Primatologist and anthropologist Dr Jane Goodall, PHD, DBE, Founder – The Jane Goodall Institute and UN Messenger of Peace, is considered the world's leading authority on chimpanzees. She has worked extensively on conservation and animal welfare issues and founded the global wildlife and conservation organisation [The Jane Goodall Institute](http://www.jane-goodall.org).
5. Since 2018, Compassion in World Farming has been leading a coalition of 170 organisations from across Europe to support the '[End the Cage Age](http://www.endthecageage.org)' European Citizens' Initiative. Over the one-year period allowed for collecting signatures, the Initiative received 1.4 million verified signatures from citizens in all EU Member States. On 2 October 2020 the signatures were submitted to the European Commission, which will soon decide on its response to the Initiative.
6. For further information about the use of cages for hens and other farmed animals, please see our [report](#) on caged farming in the EU.
7. Photos and videos of farm animals can be found [here](#).