

IPFD 4th International Dog Health Workshop (IDHW): Outline for Participants

General Goals and Outcomes - all Themes:

By the conclusion of the 4th IDHW participants should leave with a clear sense of key decisions on priorities / needs within the theme; remaining gaps/ challenges/ controversies; List of specific tasks/ actions to be undertaken over the next two years, by whom; and a clear understanding of how they, personally, will help achieve the desired outcomes.

Please see: [4th International Dog Health Workshop Pre-meeting Resources](#) including:

- current overview of entire workshop; schedule; speakers list and poster invite, as well as,
- page for each theme with links to more resources.

.... **Please note this is still evolving... check for new updates until the workshop...**

The concept of Breed Theme

Development of sustainable definition/s of dog breeds

- **Working Group Coordinator(s):** Helena Skarp (Sweden)
- **Resource persons:** Astrid Indrebø (Norway), Helena Skarp (Sweden) and Katariina Mäki (Finland)
- **Facilitators:** Astrid Indrebø (Norway) and Helena Skarp (Sweden)
- **Note Taker:** Nina Hansen

Context for the concept of breed theme:

At the 1st IDHW one theme was “Prerequisites and procedures for recognition of breeds and varieties”. The outcome of the theme was a proposal:

“The cynological organizations are urged to apply stricter regulations for international recognition of breeds. They are strongly recommended: - not to recognize new breeds created from already existing breeds, - not to recognize national varieties of already existing breeds as new breeds, - to counteract restrictions that prevent interbreeding across varieties based on colour, coat, size and function within breeds. Procedures for application of genetic tools for evaluation of populations to be considered for international recognition should be outlined in collaboration with geneticists. Furthermore, a common international databank for storage of molecular genetic material and data on individual breeds should be encouraged. Procedures for evaluation of the health status in populations to be considered for international recognition should be outlined in collaboration with the veterinarian profession”

On the two subsequent IDHWs there has not been any themes directly addressing the issue of recognition of breeds and varieties or the concept of breed itself. This year’s theme broadens the perspective from recognition of breeds to covering the entire concept of breed and the impact of that concept on the health of individual dogs and entire breeds.

So why a theme addressing the issue now? In some dog breeds, the current definition of ‘breed’ poses great challenges for breed clubs and individual dog breeders. Handling health problems while maintaining a sustainable genetic variation within the breed, while selecting for desired traits such as conformation and/or working ability, proves a complicated and in some breeds almost impossible task. Small populations, heavy selection and further divisions of breeds into even smaller populations (or sub-populations) is the reality in many dog breeds today.

The current way of defining breeds has not been revised for a very long time. The definition that might have proven well-functioning during breed development is perhaps not the ultimate formula a hundred years later.

An update of the way we define breeds could be the key to a sustainable way of managing our breeds while increasing the possibility to preserve or even improve desirable traits in the breeds. The concept of breed can be divided into several different underlying dimensions that should be taken into account during the discussions:

- Population dimension: i.e. what animals are considered to be of that breed and their status (age, sex)?
- Phenotypic dimension: e.g. conformation (standard), behaviour.
- Geographical dimension: are the animals localized in a sole region or country.
- Genetic dimension: to what extent the elements above define a genetic identity (specific or not) to the population.
- Sociological dimension: who are the people that consider a given population to be a breed and how does their behaviour impact the breed? This would include owners' perceptions of breed which include crossbreeds, designer breeds and even mongrels.
- Policy dimension: are there specific organizations (national and international clubs) and/or a legal framework behind the breed definition?
- Time dimension: how the different dimensions described above evolve through time.

Key activities for this theme include:

- Identify current definitions in use and reasons for these definitions being in use.
- Describe possible ways of defining dog breeds, pros and cons of different definitions.
- Identify stakeholders and expertise on the area.
- Assess the need to update/revise definition.
- If changes are suggested: Investigate when/where/by whom updates in definition can/should be made.
- Long term and short term goals, strategies and priorities.

Organisation of Breakout Session:

Preliminary Time frame

- Breakouts: 15:00-18:00 on Friday and 8:15-10:45 on Saturday morning.
- Reporting/ sharing from breakouts is from 10:45-12:45 on Saturday.
 - This will include both priorities, gaps and action plans

Focus for each Breakout Session:

1. 15:00-15:50 – Friday

- Who's in the group and what they would like to achieve
 - Summary of pre-workshop reading

- Describe and identify:
 - Describe the reasons for keeping dogs divided into different breeds today. Positive aspects.
 - What is the core of the breed: the way it looks, the way it behaves, its ancestry, its unique set of alleles, all of this combined?
 - To what extent does each of the underlying dimensions (population, phenotype, geographic etc.) of the concept of breed impact the health and welfare of dogs?
 - What do we want with the breeds, preserve vs. develop? What happens if we only preserve/only develop? The role of “fashion”?
 - How do we define breeds today? Since when? Why? The history of breeds – why do we have 346 breeds (FCI)? Do we need them all as separate breeds with closed studbooks? Differences within breed sometimes greater than differences between breeds.
 - FCI, UK and USA regulations concerning recognition of new breeds
 - New breeds we accept on national basis?
 - Pros and cons of the definitions we use today. Is it possible to have closed studbooks forever? Genetic diversity – why is that important?
 - Identify other possible ways to define dog breeds. Can a breed be defined solely by purpose? By type? By genetics? By looks? By mentality? Other?
 - Describe the pros and cons of different definitions.
- The FCI-list about crossing of varieties and closely related breeds
- An update on national crossing projects – saving small populations by increasing the genetic diversity and/or improving health status. How can we promote such projects? Impact of single time crosses?
- Breeds with anatomic features which are (more or less) impossible to avoid in order to breed for desired traits that are described in the breed standard (e.g., ridgeless dogs in ridgeback breeds, coated dogs in naked breeds)
- Benefits/risks/need to include the expanding population of ‘consumer-defined’ crosses in discussions and education?

2. 16:15-18:00 – Friday

- Continue and wrap up the discussions from the previous session
- Assessing the need for changes and identifying tools:
 - Assessing the need to update the definition. Can the same benefits be achieved using other tools?
 - If a change is suggested: Investigate when/where/by whom changes in definition can/should be made.
 - Should there be one definition for all breeds or could different breeds be defined in different ways (parallel systems)?

- The role of Kennel Clubs, Breed clubs and the FCI. Experts on the subject in different areas?
 - Identify stakeholders and their roles
 - How to engage stakeholders
- Identify main challenges to move forward on the issue
- Preparing a key-point summary to share with participants of other breakout groups

3. 08:15-10:15 – Saturday

- Recapping on Friday's outputs & focusing on actions to leave with.
- Long term and short term goals.
- Strategies and priorities to achieve the goals.
- Assigning people to actions to be completed after IDHW4
- Preparing the theme presentation to share at 10:45 in plenary

Pre-workshop resources:

Please keep checking as resources will be updated at:

- [Pre-meeting resources](#)
- [4th IDHW Theme #3: Breed-Specific Health Strategies](#)
- Presentations and outputs from previous IDHWs.
 - Refereed publication: [Moving from information and collaboration to action: report from the 3rd International Dog Health Workshop, Paris in April 2017](#)

Required pre-workshop activities:

- Reading (for the scientific papers abstract, summary and results/conclusions is required reading, the other chapters are optional):
 - [Article by M Worboys 2019: Dog breeds are mere Victorian confections, neither pure nor ancient](#)
 - [Debate article by I Borelius, 2019: Why did cross breeding become taboo in the world of pedigree dogs](#)
 - Peter Friedrich – [Rottweilers](#)
 - [Dreger et al 2016. Whole genome sequence, SNP chips and pedigree structure: Building demographic profiles in domestic dog breeds to optimize genetic trait mapping.](#)
 - [Farel et al 2015. The challenges of pedigree dog health: approaches to combating inherited disease](#)
 - [Leroy et al 2015. Inbreeding impact on litter size and survival in selected canine breeds](#)

- [Lewis et al 2015. Trends in genetic diversity for all Kennel Club registered pedigree dog breeds](#)
- [Pedersen et al 2016. A genetic assessment of the English bulldog](#)
- [Jansson et al 2018. Pedigree data indicate rapid inbreeding and loss of genetic diversity within populations of native, traditional dog breeds of conservation concern](#)

- Background
 - Presentations and output from the first IDHW, Breeds and varieties.
 - <https://dogwellnet.com/files/file/121-1st-idhw-suggested-actions/>
 - FCI procedure for International recognition of a new breed
 - <http://fci.be/en/FCI-Scientific-Commission-71.html>
 - FCI general and breed specific guidelines about crosses of breeds and breed varieties
 - <http://www.fci.be/medias/SCI-REG-CRO-RAC-VAR-1992.pdf>