



Working Group Coordinator:

Helena Skarp (Sweden)

Facilitators:

Astrid Indrebø (Norway) and Helena Skarp (Sweden)

Note Taker:

Nina Hansen (Norway)

Resource persons:

Astrid Indrebø (Norway), Helena Skarp (Sweden) and Katariina Mäki (Finland)

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.

Defining breed

- Describe the reasons for keeping dogs divided into different breeds today. Positive aspects.
- Temperament
- Phenotype
- Working history /Culture and history
- Predictability
- You know what you are going to get, predictable
- Size
- Behaviours
- Explicit criteria and hidden criteria
- A breed is a reference point
- Health



- 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?
- Some different priorities depending on breed
- Different priorities depending e.g. if ask a KC/ breed club or somebody outside the dog world.
- Usually a balance between temperament and body construction /appearance (conformation)
- Associated or perceived health problems or behavioural risks

- Q. 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?
- Add time as a dimension (e.g. surge in popularity)
- Different emphasis between breeds
- Often driven by focus for the breed (e.g exhibition, competition, working/societal function)
- Embrace diversity of form and function within breeds (e.g. working v show type)

- Q. What do we want with the breeds, preserve vs. develop? What happens if we only preserve/only develop? The role of “fashion”?
- Need for development is important factor (i.e. health issue, popularity/supply or other?)
- Where coat color is connected with health problems then it should be 'banned' otherwise be more flexible for the public/fashion demand - focus on health
- Colors that change the expression of the breed eg eye colour that for instance make a companion dog look aggressive should be discouraged.
- Harmonization of varieties in terms of color and coat type.
- 'Development' intent can be positive or negative (perhaps sometimes both).
- Genetics cannot be fixed (heritability produces change).

- 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 definition: “A population of dogs sharing definable and inheritable phenotypic characteristics, after breeding undertaken by humans over a given period of time, allowing this population to be distinguished from other defined populations of dogs/or defined breeds.” (Modified after Clutton-Brock (1999))
 - The number of breeds are not a problem as long as interbreeding is permitted between related breeds and/or breeds with common breeding goals, in a controlled way.
 - Using genetic tests to determine common ancestry and/or genetic disorder risks can be useful tools.

- FCI, UK and USA regulations concerning recognition of new breeds §
New breeds we accept on national basis?

"FCI : A new breed can be recognized as such when it meets the definition of a breed."

New breeds can be either a population of dogs, which is regionally or nationally recognized or a new population of a unique type of dog. They cannot be the result of a direct cross between two FCI recognized breeds."

- Registration in an activity register with microchip as reference should be allowed for all dogs. Consider recording a breeding history?
- The KCs should be "the go to place" for all dogs. This does not mean that they all should get pedigrees.

- Pros and cons of the definitions we use today. Is it possible to have closed studbooks forever? Genetic diversity – why is that important?
- A dog is a dog and stud books should not be entirely closed.
- Permit reasonable preservation of genetic diversity without damaging the core purpose of the breed (but the core purpose can change).
- Trends and fashion have a tendency towards harm if uncontrolled.
- Diversity important for health and fertility.

The FCI-list about crossing of varieties and closely related breeds.

- We believe that this concept should be explored and potentially expanded/developed to create an environment of permission for national KCs to employ more open registries

An update on national crossing projects – saving small populations by increasing the genetic diversity and/or improving health and/or temperament status and or reproductive fitness. How can we promote such projects? Impact of single time crosses?

- Use the data from cross-breeding projects (particularly aimed at health or hybrid vigour) to promote further activity/development. If more data is needed we should collect such data.
- Create guidelines, a quality standard and outline methodology for cross breeding projects.
- Experience has shown - To achieve an improvement of the more important positive aspects (e.g. health and/or mentality and/or working ability) we may have to tolerate negative aspects (e.g minor conformational change).

Breeds with anatomic features which are (more or less) genetically 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 hairless breeds)

- Varieties lacking the afore mentioned desired trait should be fully accepted for breeding and showing (e.g. ridge back and ridge less). Breeding between varieties should be allowed.

Benefits/risks/need to include the expanding population of 'consumer-defined' crosses in discussions and education?

- 'Canute' element of resisting the tide of public opinion
- Links to supply of pet dogs issue
- Framework for acceptance is needed to include health and genetic realities (e.g avoiding known inherited diseases, inbreeding and temperament)
- Conformational issues (BOAS, jaw structure)

Assessing the need for changes and identifying tools:

- Assessing the need to update the definition. Can the same benefits be achieved using other tools?
 - We need guidelines at FCI level to help kennel clubs and breed clubs with how to proceed with breeding between varieties and breeds.
 - FCI Scientific and Standard Commission working in cooperation with other kennel clubs should be given the task to develop such guidelines.

Two different scenarios

- Cross breeding projects
- Open studbooks



Long term and short term goals



The primary focus of these recommendations is health and welfare of all dogs.

- Long term:
 - Open studbooks between related breeds and/or breeds with common breeding goals in a controlled way.
 - Cross breeding projects should be used when a health or welfare problem can not be solved within breed.
 - KCs databases should be open for all dogs
- Short term:
 - Create a positive attitude to the concept of more open studbooks.
 - To encourage the development of crossbreeding projects.
 - Encourage KCs to record all dogs on a database.

Strategies



- Strategies
 - Collaborating with breed clubs and breeders at an early stage.
 - FCI Scientific and Standard Commission in cooperation with other kennel clubs should be asked to take on the task to develop guidelines to help kennel clubs and breed clubs with how to proceed with breeding between varieties and breeds.
 - Consult and identify breed issues where the previously mentioned guidelines and methodologies should be used.
- Assigning people to actions to be completed after IDHW₄:
Working group formed: Everybody in the group and (hopefully) Gregoire Leroy, anyone who want to join.