

# Animal Law: Towards a Global Definition?

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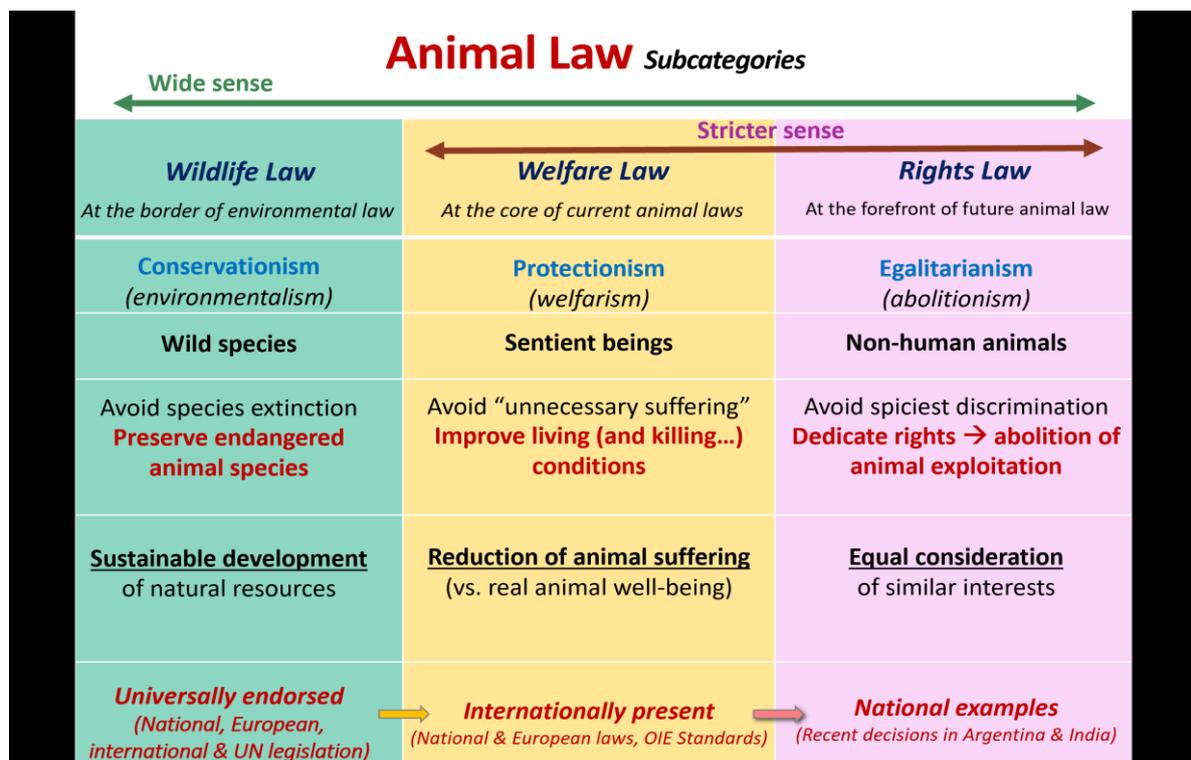
According to a common definition: **“Animal law is the law that relates to animals”**<sup>1</sup>.

**In general, animal law is synonymous of animal protection law** (as taught and commonly understood)<sup>2</sup>.

In a wide sense, animal protection law subcategories are wildlife law, welfare law and rights law.

**In a strict acception, animal protection law relates to individual beings. In a wider sense, it also covers wild species preservation**, which is at the border between environmental and animal law.

More specifically, it relates to *environmental law* where aiming at *conserving wild animal species from extinction* when endangered (from an environmental approach). And it relates to *animal law* in the stricter sense when aiming at *protecting individual beings from suffering*, in order to protect their welfare and/or their rights (see below).



As for global animal law, it can be considered as the field of animal law which is global, meaning universal (for all countries). In research, it can be considered to be a global approach of animal law, covering all

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<sup>1</sup> BROOMAN, S. et D. LEGGE, *Law Relating to Animals*, Cavendish, 1997. Here it can be legitimate to ask:  
 1- Which law is concerned ? Animal law involves various sectors of the law (criminal, civil, constitutional law) as well as all levels of legislation: national, regional (eg European) and international law.  
 2- Which animals are concerned? Stricto sensu, animal law relates to sentient animals (to be protected against suffering).  
<sup>2</sup> In this common sense, animal law is understood as the law for the animals, and not against them. But in reality, animal law also covers all kind of animal (ab)uses that are addressed in the laws (eg methods of exploitation and killing etc.).

animals, all human activities and interactions with animals, and all levels of legislation (national, regional (eg: European) and international. Finally, Global Animal Law (GAL) is a conference cycle<sup>3</sup>, a university program<sup>4</sup> and a leading organization called the Global Animal Law GAL Association. It provides key resources and solutions for improving the law in favor of animals globally, online at [www.globalanimallaw.org](http://www.globalanimallaw.org).

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<sup>3</sup> See for instance the last Global Animal Law Conference III held in Hong Kong in 2018, online at <https://law.lclark.edu/live/events/283980-global-animal-law-conference-iii>.

<sup>4</sup> This Program is directed by Dr Anne Peters at the Max Planck Institute. More at: <https://www.mpil.de/en/pub/research/areas/public-international-law/global-animal-law.cfm>.