

ONE VOICE ALERT ABOUT THE CNRS PRIMATES BREEDING EXTENSION PROJECT:

A threat toward EU works to phase-out animal experiments and citizen's expectations.

European Intergroup on the welfare & conservation of animals

- Meeting of 9th of July 2026 -

Firstly, we would like to thank you for inviting us in this session.

We are here today to alert about the project of extension of the CNRS primates breeding sites in Rousset (southern of France) for laboratories, raising serious questions and concerns about the European phase-out animal testing goals.

- First, a questionable purpose: the extension will only furnish 35% of the French "needs". Hundreds of primates will still be imported from Mauritius or Asia. We know, by our undercover investigations in 2023 and with our local partners that wild captures are still widely done.

With massive importation and wildlife trafficking, the risk of viruses from primates is real. Increasing a pool in Europe might increase the risk to humans too.

- Secondly, a questionable timing: this activity and the financial support run completely counter to the policy aiming the phase-out animal experiments in the Directive and in the new European roadmap. The policy is to move away from animal testing not make it easier to happen. Expanding primate breeding and availability within EU will only make it harder to phase out experiments with primates regardless of the availability of alternatives, especially if local jobs are at stake.
- Thirdly, a questionable funding: 30 million of euros of public fundings coming from plan named France 2030, supposedly aim to catch up in the industrial sector, innovative technologies and support the green transition is highly concerning. Because this could also mean that other parts of European Commissions may be indirectly funding work that is running counter to the roadmap and citizens' wishes.

At a time where many countries are investing in the development of alternative methods, France is moving in the opposite direction.

- Finally, a questionable lack of transparency: this opacity has been also criticized by the National Commission for Public Debate
The CNRS's own ethics committee has raised a number of scientific concerns and questions, which have still not been addressed...

In conclusion:

We strongly alert you about:

- the political risks to the European Union ongoing works
- the ethical impacts
- the research and science impacts, and
- the sanitary and environmental risks.

A major question arises:

Instead of developing a project such Rousset, shouldn't the leading state for animal experimentation also become the main contributor to the development of alternative methods?

Thank you for your attention.

Claire Dulière,
Head of Animal experimentation
campaigns, One Voice

Marc-William Millereau,
Rousset' campaign manager, One Voice