



It's the time of the year where we are squeezed in between the various festivities. With Halloween and Thanksgiving behind us, we prepare for the year-end celebrations which are just around the corner.

It's the time of the year where we determine our best intentions for the next year while we are remembering the events of the past year, either in the vast world or in our own private life. I sincerely hope that for all of you personally it was a year to remember in a very positive way.

On an economic and political level, some of the most heard phrases all over the world were probably '*climate change*' and '*sustainable development*'. Luckily, these have finally become important topics globally, no matter the sector you are active in or the function one is holding. It seems that finally consciousness has raised that the future of our planet and its resources are the responsibility of each and every one of us. But the big question to me remains if our generation is actively doing enough to effectively and urgently stop the self-destructing spiral in which our society is currently trapped.

The same goes when we are reflecting these thoughts to animal shipping. For sure, a lot has been done and achieved to improve the wellbeing of animals in transit in the past decade. Luckily, most of us in the shipping industry do realize that animal shipping should only be done under the best possible conditions and by following the legislations accurately so that the wellbeing and health of the various species in transit are secured. But perhaps, whatever we are doing, that might also not be enough... Offering good – preferably best – shipping practices is an important topic, stopping the trade and traffic in endangered species is currently even a far bigger challenge. A challenge that definitely needs more commitment and help from the transport sector.

In the past months, ATA has reached out to various organizations worldwide to see how we can help and how we can do better. With many of these, ATA is now co-operating and joining ideas and forces with the sole goal to have more and better results in the interest of our animal friends being shipped.

ATA is also reaching out to the technology industry. It does not come as a surprise telling you that nowadays we are being deluged with information on 'e-commerce', 'block-chain data' and 'artificial intelligence'. A number of ideas from these modern times are, as we speak, currently being translated into initiatives that could probably help our industry and the animals we ship.

These are just a few small little things... which might perhaps make a difference some day. But let us all think together how - either as individuals or as an organization - we can do even better. Share your ideas and concerns with us! I am absolutely convinced that many of these little things.... for sure will make a huge difference!

**All of us within the ATA Board wish you and yours an extremely prosperous and peaceful 2019!**

Your president,

*Filip Vande Cappelle*

Please join ATA in Budapest, Hungary this March/April for the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference.



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