

Position Statement on Animal Research

CIIMAR – Centro Interdisciplinar de Investigação Marinha e Ambiental is a signatory of the [Transparency Agreement on Animal Research in Portugal](#). This is an initiative supported by the scientific community in collaboration with the [European Animal Research Association](#) (EARA) to promote openness and transparency about the use of animals in biomedical research across the country.

Animal research plays an essential role in the knowledge of the biological mechanisms that are involved in diseases and in the development of treatments and new therapeutics. Without the use of animals in the biomedical research most of the medicines, antibiotics, vaccines and surgical techniques that are applied in human and veterinary medicine would not exist.

A part of the scientific work developed at CIIMAR and that contributes to the improvement of biomedical field takes place thanks to the use of animals in research. In our scientific projects we use several species as animal models, such as zebrafish, farmed fish species and invertebrates (green crab, shrimps and crayfish, sea urchins, amphipods, mussels and clams, triops, pond snails, daphnids, copepods) to investigate the impact of human and environmental stressors and diseases. The data generated with such experiments unravels novel understanding about human diseases, as well as the biological dynamics of aquatic ecosystems and the links between these processes and responses to Global changes. The information gathered provides better understand on ecosystems functioning and promotes the natural capital and the sustained management of marine resources through monitoring of ecosystems health, optimization of aquaculture, and biotechnological exploitation of the resources for environmental and human health applications.

The welfare of animals used in research is a fundamental issue and the research carried on here strictly respects the Portuguese (Decree-Law no. 113/2013 of the 7th of August) and European regulations (Directive 2010/63/EU) that rule the use of animals in research.

The humane use of animals in the research performed at our institution complies with legal standards and is reviewed by ethics committee and animal welfare body which promote the principles of the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement). There is no research project that requires the use of animals that begins without the necessary animal welfare and ethical evaluation by the Animal Welfare and Ethics Body (ORBEA) committee of CIIMAR and final authorization by the competent authority (DGAV). It is also ensured that both the animal care personnel and the researchers involved in experimentation have the necessary certified training and knowledge to perform research with animals. Furthermore, all animal research experiments are performed in legally certified animal facilities fulfilling all legislative and ethical requirements about the welfare of experimental animals.