

Background

The Canadian Council of Animal Care (CCAC) requires the University of Saskatchewan (USask) University Animal Care Committee (UACC) to document and report all animal use in an Animal Use Protocol (AUP), including all animal work with fish and wildlife caught during field work. Given the often unpredictable nature of field studies, sometimes the target species of fish and wildlife captured exceed those approved on the AUP and/or there is capture of species not approved on the AUP. Wildlife in this document refers to amphibians, birds, reptiles and mammals used in the field, and does not refer to any wildlife used in a designated facility.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure document is to provide clear definitions of over-catch, by-catch, the required reporting methods to the Animal Research Ethics Board (AREB) and the UACC Animal Order Desk (AOD), and how to acquire approval to use animals not approved on an AUP.

These procedures are effective January 1, 2022.

Definitions

Over-catch is defined as intentional or unintentional capture/handling/animal use and/or death of any number of animals greater than those previously approved by the AREB on the AUP during the course of the field study.

By-catch is defined as unintentional capture/handling/animal use and/or death of any species not previously approved by the AREB on an AUP during the course of the field study.

Procedures

Reporting Over-Catch and By-Catch on a Mortality, Morbidity and Incident (MMI) Report Form for Fish and Wildlife

To facilitate reporting of by-catch and over-catch during field work, the UACC developed a [Mortality, Morbidity and Incident \(MMI\) Report Form for Fish and Wildlife](#). All by-catch and over-catch of animals (see definitions above) must be reported to the AREB using an MMI Report Form for Fish and Wildlife.

Researchers/Instructors must use the [MMI Report Form for Fish and Wildlife](#) to document any mortality, morbidity or incidents that occur during the field work portion of the AUP. Incidents may include but are not limited to: major or minor injuries experienced during capture or procedures; interference by the public that affects the study design or capture of animals; and other unexpected adverse events.

The completed [MMI Report Form for Fish and Wildlife](#) must be submitted to [UACC](#) within four weeks of the incident or sooner if possible. If the report cannot be submitted within this time frame, the researcher/instructor is responsible to contact the Animal Care and Research Support (ACRS) Office to discuss the circumstances and request an extension. At the latest, in all cases, the [MMI Report Form for Fish and Wildlife](#) must be submitted as soon as the researcher/instructor returns to the USask campus.

When non-target animals (i.e. by-catch) or more animals than approved (over-catch) are captured, every attempt must be made to safely release these animals back to their natural habitat. In some cases, animals with transmissible pathogens may not be advised for release (e.g. chytrid, Trichomonosis, white nose, etc.), and in some cases it may be illegal to release invasive species.

All by-catch and over-catch must be reported to the UACC AREB. Authorized animal users of the AUP will record the species and number of animals captured and report all deaths (either due to capture or by euthanasia) on the [MMI Report Form for Fish and Wildlife](#), as well as report the animal numbers to the AOD.

The [MMI Report Form for Fish and Wildlife](#) requests additional information to determine what methods of capture were used and why non-target species or additional animals were caught. The additional information will help the UACC Clinical and Post-Approval Review (PAR) Veterinarian(s) understand the special circumstances of the particular field situation. The UACC Veterinarian(s) will work with the Principal Investigator (PI)/Course Director (CD) to refine animal capture to reduce by-catch and over-catch in the future. Involvement of the PAR Veterinarian is intended to provide guidance and ensure continued AUP compliance, with an overall goal to reduce instances of by-catch or over-catch of non-approved animals.

Reporting to the UACC Animal Order Desk

In addition to reporting of all approved animal use, all over-catch and by-catch must be reported to the [UACC Animal Order Desk](#) (AOD). To document the use of all animals used under an AUP in a timely manner, the UACC recommends submission of the [Animal Use Request and Report Form](#) as soon as possible upon return to the USask campus following any field work or at the end of each field season. At minimum, the PI/CD must submit this information by the end of each calendar year for reporting to the CACC in the Animal Use Data Form (AUDF). When reporting to the AOD, the PI/CD must clearly distinguish between: animals already approved by the AREB on an AUP; additional animals that were caught/used (i.e. over-catch); and those that were not approved for capture (i.e. by-catch). These details can be clarified in the comments section of the report form.

Use of Over-Catch and By-Catch by submitting a Modification form

In principle, and as required by the CCAC, the UACC does not permit retroactive approval of animal use. However, the UACC acknowledges that special circumstances may arise and that field work with fish and wildlife does not always proceed as planned in an approved AUP. Only under extenuating circumstances will retroactive approval for the use of over-catch and/or by-catch be granted by the AREB. In these circumstances, all over-catch and by-catch must be reported to the UACC by completing 1) a [MMI Report Form for Fish and Wildlife](#) and 2) a [AUP Modification Form](#) and submit these to the AREB if a PI/CD wants to incorporate any over-catch or by-catch in the experimental design/course of an approved AUP. To request the use of over-catch and/or by-catch, the PI/CD must submit the [MMI Report Form for Fish and Wildlife](#) and the [AUP Modification Form](#) to the [UACC](#) within four weeks or sooner if possible.

The [AUP Modification Form](#) for the use of over-catch and/or by-catch must clearly describe the situation, species and number of animals, their use in the study design and the date relating to their use. The use of any by-catch and/or over-catch will be formally added to an AUP only after the AREB reviews and approves the modification request. If the AREB denies the modification request, none of the data relating to the by-catch and/or over-catch animals is permitted.

Summary

It is the PI/CD's responsibility to make every effort to not exceed approved animal numbers. It is the PI/CD's responsibility to report to the AREB any changes in animal use and to provide clear justification why the AREB should consider the exceptional circumstances and grant retroactive approval. Failure to provide animal use information and justification will result in non-compliance and actions taken as per the *UACC Procedures on Animal Use Non-Compliance*. As per the *UACC Procedures on Submission of a Modification to an Existing Animal Use Protocol*, failure to submit a modification form represents non-compliance in animal use, which may result in: a) For-Cause Post Approval Review; b) Review by the UACC Executive Committee; c) Suspension of the AUP; d) Inability to use data collected; e) Retraction of publication.

Approved by the UACC, 25 November 2021