

Collecting animal tissues

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1 Introduction

Utrecht University and the UMC Utrecht are striving to reduce the number of laboratory animals being used, and for the best use of those animals that are used, whenever possible. They also wish to increase awareness of this policy within UU and the UMC Utrecht. In some cases, researchers who need tissues¹ can use material from animals who have already been used or are being used for another purpose. It is not always clear to researchers what is considered an animal experiment, and what conditions must be met in order to collect tissues. This policy should make it clear.

2 Purpose

The purpose of the Policy on Collecting Tissues from Animals is:

- to create clarity about what does and does not constitute an animal experiment;
- to identify the degree to which tissues are being collected from laboratory animals being used or having been used for another purpose, as well as surplus animals that were killed.

¹ The term ‘tissues’ should be understood to mean any type of biological material originating from animals, including blood, cells, tissue, organs, lymph, cerebral fluid, exudates, hair, urine or faeces.

3 Scope

3.1 For whom is this policy intended?

The policy on collecting tissues from animals is binding for employees of UU and UMC Utrecht. External parties, who are dependent on UU and/or UMC Utrecht for collecting material, are expected to comply with this policy. Exceptions can only be made in consultation with the Animal Welfare Body Utrecht (hereafter: AWB).

3.2 Reusing animals

Reuse of an animal must meet the legal stipulations for reuse in [Art. 1e of the Experiments on Animals Act \(Wet op de dierproeven\)](#). If surplus animals are being used and/or if animals are being reused, the [Policy on surplus laboratory animals, reuse and rehoming](#) also applies.

3.3 What is not an animal experiment

The policy does not apply to tissues:

- a. from an animal slaughtered for food production;
- b. from a pet or farm animal killed in regular veterinary practice on veterinary indication;
- c. that have been collected on veterinary indication from pets or farm animals, and that can also be used for research or education;
- d. from an animal who was found dead;
- e. from an animal killed as part of an experiment with a different research question;
- f. from an animal killed because it was surplus and could not be reused or rehomed;
- g. collected without causing the animal any discomfort.

3.4 What is an animal experiment

Collecting tissues for research or educational purposes is considered an animal experiment if the tissue is collected:

- a. from a living animal, when there is no veterinary indication, and if one or more procedures that cause discomfort are involved;
- b. from a laboratory animal on whom a procedure (such as injection or perfusion) is performed shortly before it is killed with the purpose of making the tissue optimally suited for the envisaged research or education, even if this procedure is performed under terminal anaesthesia;
- c. when the interested party determines the method and/or time of killing of the animal, because it is necessary for the condition of the tissue being collected.

4 Procedure

4.1 Individual project licence

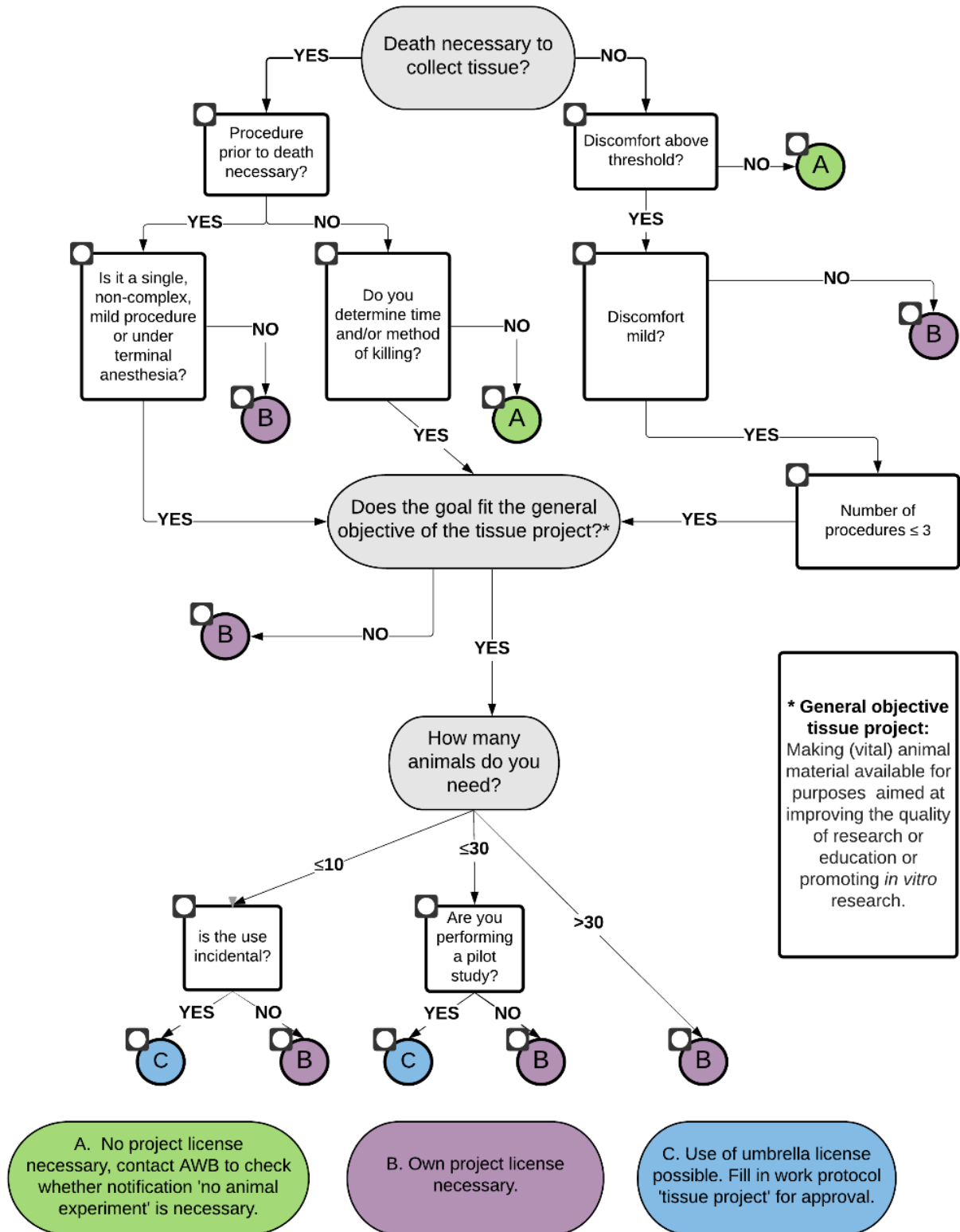
If collection involves an animal experiment, the researcher must either have a project licence and a work protocol in force thereunder in which the collection of the tissue is described, or notify the CCD (see [“Melding, wijzigingsaanvraag of nieuwe aanvraag dierproef” on the CCD's website](#) (Dutch only) for the parameters). The latter applies when an additional procedure is carried out for collecting tissue as part of a different research question during a terminal anaesthesia performed.

4.2 Umbrella project licence

If the researcher does not have their own project licence under which tissue can be collected, they can use the decision tree below to determine whether use can be made of the umbrella licence (in Dutch) [AVD1080020209606: Gebruik van organen en weefsels ter bevordering van kwaliteit van dierproeven en van in vitro en ex vivo research](#). If the researcher wishes to and is able to use this licence, they must make this known to the AWB by filling out and submitting the form specifically designed for this kind of [work protocol](#), which can be found on [our website](#).

4.3 ATEX

[ATEX](#) (Animal and Tissue Exchange Platform) is a website that shows supply and demand for animals, organs and tissues (within the UU and UMC Utrecht for now). It can be used to see quickly whether particular animals or tissues are available, or if there is currently demand for them. The user enters the details of the request or offer on the website and finds out whether they match up with an existing offer or request. If there is a match, the AWB will automatically be informed as well. The AWB will then verify that the preconditions for re-use and the permit requirements can be met.



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