Hello, I’m Adrian Smith and I’m going to tell you about the Norecopa website. This presentation is available at the web address norecopa.no/FAQ

My email address is on this slide, and you are welcome to contact me if you have any qestions or would like more information.

Norecopa is Norway’s National Consensus Platform for the 3Rs: Replacement, Reduction and Refinement of Animal Experiments.

Norecopa gets its name because it has representatives for all four major stakeholders in its governing body, and is therefore recognised by the umbrella organisation *ecopa*, the European Consensus-Platform for Alternatives.

Norecopa was officially founded in 2007, but the process of building the website really started in 1991, when the first of several databases within the site was constructed.

If you have been in the lab animal community for some years, you may have heard the names of several of these resources.

The oldest one is the NORINA database, started in 1991, which contains information on alternatives or supplements to animal use in education and training.

TextBase was started a few years later and contains information on textbooks and other literature within lab animal science and related subjects: nice to know about if you are in the process of starting or expanding your collection.

3R Guide provides information on global 3R resources such as databases, guidelines, 3R centres, journals, email discussion lists.

Classic AVs is a small database with material which we have taken out of NORINA because it uses old technology – but which may still be relevant for some.

Oslovet was the name of the server when these databases were located at the Veterinary School in Oslo.

But now, all these resources and much more have been united in one large database, which you will find at norecopa.no

Two other comments:

1. First, we have zero tolerance for dead links on the website, and we have installed a Broken Link Checker to monitor the links automatically. Let us know if you find one. There will always be some, because we have archived a lot of information on, for example, past events and news items, but the main part of the database should not have many such links.
2. Secondly, we have spent a great deal of energy making sure that web addresses from the old websites redirect to norecopa.no, so you don’t have to make new bookmarks. Let us know if an old bookmark does not redirect properly, and we will fix it.

The Norecopa website looks like this. There are currently over 7,500 pages, with a large number of links to both internal and external pages. There is an intelligent search engine built into the site, and it available in the top right hand corner of every page.

We have spent a lot of money making sure that the website looks good on all platforms, and that is is printer-friendly. The contents are based upon our work in the lab animal field over more than 30 years, and we present the best resources from all over the world. The aim of the Norecopa website is to be a one-stop-shop for those looking for guidelines and resources within lab animal science and alternatives. We hope you will agree.

A few words about the intelligent search engine:

It has an auto-complete function, to help you fill in the search field, and it will suggest similar terms which you can choose. The search engine also uses a synonym list, which we have written specifically for lab animal science. The webpages have also been categorised, so you can reduce or increase your number of hits by adjusting these filters. The search engine has also a number of advanced features, and we recommend the help file if you want to know more.

Let’s compare a search for the phrase ‘bleeding mice’ in Google and Norecopa. A Google search will return over 12 million hits. The same search in Norecopa returns just over 70 hits, but all of these point to quality-controlled resources produced by laboratory animal experts.

Here you can see that the synonym list has also retrieved resources where the words ‘blood sampling’ are used instead of ‘bleeding’, and on the right you can see the filters which can be turned on or off, to narrow or expand your search.

If you don’t know where to start, try putting an asterisk (or star) in the search field and press Enter (or Return). This will retrieve all the pages on the website, and you can use the filters to look more closely at what the website contains. If you want to return immediately to the front page, click on the star or the word Norecopa at the top of the page.

On the front page there are also a number of icons, so those just interested in, for example, fish, or in animal welfare, can go directly to resources of interest for them.

Let’s now look at the main menu – the white text on the blue background at the top of every page.

Under “About Norecopa”, you can, among other things, download a book about Norecopa’s work, and you can see the presentations from those who have lectured at Norecopa’s annual meetings. There is also a section containing position statements which Norecopa has written.

And at the top of every page, users can choose between English or the Norwegian language.

Under “Alternatives”, there is information about the 3R concept, which underpins all modern laboratory animal science, and also a lesser known concept which Norecopa has published, the 3 S’s by Carol Newton. The section also contains information on alternatives to animal experiments.

The next section describes the databases which I have already mentioned.

Here is a picture of one of the records in the NORINA database, describing a mannikin which can be used for teaching purposes. Each record includes details of the supplier.

The TextBase database of literature is built up in a similar way. The records include a description of the book, a picture of the cover and the table of contents in most cases, and details of the publisher or supplier.

The 3R Guide database is rather different. It contains a global overview of 3R resources such as databases, 3R centres and guidelines for animal research. 3R Guide is the result of a collaboration with AWIC, the US Department of Agriculture’s Animal Welfare Information Center.

The database is being expanded to include other collections, such as this list of European 3R Centres.

The next section focuses on education and training, with a comprehensive list of those providing courses in Laboratory Animal Science, both in Norway and abroad. Norecopa’s main contribution to this section is a set of films and slide series showing how to handle, inject and bleed lab animal species. Most of these films were produced at the Oslo Veterinary School. One more recent addition is this short video showing a refinement of the method of scruffing rodents, which places less pressure on the throat region, making it more comfortable for the animal. The film has been translated into Spanish.

There is also a lot of information about homemade educational aids, following a workshop which Norecopa arranged in April 2018.

The next section describes in detail both European and Norwegian legislation on animal research.

The next section describes, among other things, the international consensus meetings arranged by Norecopa. These have focused on species which are not discussed in detail at mainstream lab animal meetings, such as fish, wildlife and farm animals. These meetings are used to produce consensus statements describing the tasks ahead, and all the presentations and statement are available on the website, making them a good lasting introduction to the topic.

In addition, there is a comprehensive international Meetings Calendar, updated usually several times a week. Links to past meetings are also kept, so they will be searchable, even if many will eventually die out. All the same, this gives readers a good idea of who is arranging what.

The next main section, “More resources” hides a large number of important sub-topics. Many of these are self-explanatory and I won’t spend time describing every one. Under “Organisations”, you will find links to international organisations of relevance to lab animal science, with a separate page for animal welfare and animal rights organisations. There are sections listing email discussion lists and journals, and sections giving advice on topics such as literature searches, a Culture of Care and severity classification of procedures on animals.

This is one of the resources on the page about literature searches. It was produced by Alice Tillema in the Netherlands in connection with a workshop in Oslo arranged by Norecopa.

This slide contains some of the information about a Culture of Care at lab animal facilities. If this concept is new to you, there is a lot of information here. This section is also the host website of an International Network of Culture of Care, founded after the FELASA congress in Brussels in June 2016.

Norecopa has also produced guidance on severity classification: of procedures used on fish. Norecopa convened an international expert group to develop this guidance, since it was considered that the guidance produced by the EU Commission working party was not sufficiently relevant to fish work.

Under the section called “News”, you will find lists of organisations that deliver alerting services, which you may wish to subscribe to, and a Newsfeed with news items about animal research from European media.

In this section, you will also find Norecopa’s newsletters, which are issued 7 or 8 times a year. The old newsletters are also indexed and searchable, since they contain a lot if useful information. You can subscribe to the newsletters, which are produced in English, by entering your email address in the white field at the bottom right hand corner of every webpage.

Here are some examples of items from recent newsletters. They tend to cover new initiatives worldwide within the 3Rs, updates on Norecopa’s projects, news about research advancing the 3Rs, and food for thought: ethical issues and unsolved challenges within the field.

 The next section covers the PREPARE guidelines for planning animal experiments. PREPARE was produced by Norecopa, in collaboration with British and Norwegian experts, in 2017. I have made a separate 17-minute video describing PREPARE, which you will find at norecopa.no/PREPARE. So I won’t spend a lot of time describing them here.

PREPARE consists of a 2-page checklist, available at present in 17 languages, and designed to be used from day 1 of planning animal experiments. Importantly, in addition to the checklist, PREPARE has webpages for each of the 15 topics on the checklist, with links to external quality-controlled resources with more information.

The PREPARE guidelines are designed to be used the same way as experienced pilots use many checklists, even on routine flights, to make sure nothing is forgotten, and to divide the responsibility for procedures between themselves.

You may have heard of the ARRIVE guidelines for reporting animal experiments, since they have been endorsed by over 1,000 journals. PREPARE is designed to complement ARRIVE: PREPARE wil help you ensure the quality of an experiment by looking at the ingredients and conditions, while ARRIVE will help you report it.

You may ask why we can’t just use ARRIVE for both planning and reporting. This is because PREPARE contains many items which are not usually necessary to report, but which can seriously affect the outcome of the experiment, scientific validity, animal welfare and human health & safety.

The section called Species contains the icons I mentioned previously, if you wish to jump to resources on, say, fish.

And finally, the section called NAL, which stands for the US National Agricultural Library. Norecopa has collaborated with the Animal Welfare Information Centre at the US Department of Agriculture, who have identified over 1,600 bibliographic references of relevance to the 3Rs in the Library database. We have added these to the Norecopa website.

If you still feel you need an overview of all the resources at Norecopa’s website, please take a look at the site map, which you will find at the bottom of every page. And if you are wondering where you are, have a look at the breadcrumbs at the top of the page, which will show you the hierarchy of the page you are on. You can click on the elements to move up the hierarchy tree. And remember that this video and the text file are available at norecopa.no/info

If you can’t find what you’re looking for, use the buttons at the bottom of each webpage

or the feedback link in the blue field at the bottom of every page. You are also welcome to email me. We are also on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Norecopa’s aim is to unite the different scientific disciplines by providing a global overview of knowledge about replacement, reduction and refinement of animal research. The website has been designed to be a fast means of finding quality resources.

We would like to thank all our sponsors who have made it possible to build the website, and to collect the resources over the last 27 years.

*May I ask you for a favour?*

If you have found this presentation interesting, please spread information about Norecopa and our resources to your colleagues, at home and abroad.

If you would like to translate this presentation into your native language, you will find the commentary as a Word file, and the slides as a Powerpoint file, on the Norecopa website:

norecopa.no/info

*Thank you for listening!*