

Presentation to Animal Rights Africa:
Strategic and other issues to
consider in seeking to achieve
legal reform in SA

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Contents of this presentation

- Understanding the context and the reasons for this opportunity
- The SA political and legislative context
- Law Reform: a long, hard journey
- The agricultural context
- Parliament as a key site of struggle
- Popular participation
- Strategic vision and approach
- Conclusion: Pitfalls and opportunities

Understanding the context and the reasons for this opportunity

- Post apartheid clear-out
- SA Law Commission as central institutional structure
- Avoid seeing this as an easy or quick victory
- Don't assume a sympathetic ear or that opposition is not going to mobilise.

The SA political and legislative context

- Traditionalist resurgence
- African nationalism
- Entrenched interests and high financial stakes
- White imperialism strongly resented
- Condescending and patronising attitudes likely to derail and endanger processes

Law Reform: a long, hard journey

- Need to learn from unpopular but important and successful struggles (e.g. right to termination of pregnancy and same sex marriages).
- Significant processes driven by social movements NOT one off events...
- Embedding struggles in partnerships and alliances...

The agricultural context

- Widespread concentration and centralization of agriculture - factory farming
- Small operators increasingly driven out of business – reducing the possibility of attracting their support
- Increased marginalization of alternative voices.
- Impoverishment leading to desperation.
- The bottom line is king.

Parliament: the key site of struggle

- Parliamentary Portfolio Committee
- Don't ignore provinces
- Identify likely allies and foes and lobby accordingly
- Dedicate resources and energy to the Parliamentary realm
- Party political choices become pressing...
can this initiative succeed without ruling party support?

Popular participation

- Every piece of legislation gets taken through a popular participation process before being enacted.
- Popular support doesn't just spring up organically: it gets grown and built...
- Media and communication strategies are essential and are a *sine qua non*...
- Significant resources are required.

Strategic vision and approach

- Plan your work and work your plan
- Build alliances and partnerships
- Radicalism / extremism of any sort costs popular support:
- What is non-negotiable? What can be sacrificed?
- Know and understand your opponents...
- Gather resources.

Conclusion: Pitfalls and opportunities

- Avoid being seen as trying to impose a ready made legislative package
- Humility and authenticity win every time
- Engagement and awareness are critical
- Processes not events
- Progress not perfection
- Build institutional and other types of capacity
- Get ready for the long haul....
- Enjoy, reflect, improve.