Summary

The emphasis of this thesis is focused on a total information of severity catalogues already published in various countries. Furthermore it refers to a completely new catalogue adapted to German law which has been worked out within this thesis.

The severity of an animal experiment is based on pain, suffering and damages expressis verbis mentioned in the German Animal Welfare Act. The emphasis on these three words as well as stress, anxiety/fear and well-being as a contrary status of being under severe strain is very important. Their knowledge is an absolute premise for a more appropriate application of the severity catalogues.

Within the framework of the German application procedure it is required to assess the severity in three categories: duration of animal experiment, potential repeating procedures and pain reducing and/or eliminating methods playing an important role in the assessment process. The severity degree depends on the method, duration, intensity and frequency of exposure of the animal, the biological systems and the restriction of special needs of the individual animal or animal species. Repeated procedures increase the severity degree.

The German catalogue is established according to German law within this thesis and has similarities to the Swiss catalogue. It is intended as a help. In contrary to Switzerland, in Germany an animal welfare officer will attend animal experimentation. The catalogue is therefore not equally important as in Switzerland. For information, further catalogues of various countries are listed in this thesis in alphabethic order.

The set up severity degrees are mainly intended as a support to relate the severity of the experimental procedure on the one side to the anticipated benefits for the public on the other side - a weighing finally required by the law. Further aims of the catalogues are to facilitate the communication between the applicant, the animal welfare officer, the public veterinary and the commission of animal welfare. Moreover they represent a basis for the collection of datas for statistics according to the severity degree. Finally it should contribute to the scientist's awareness that he deals with viable, emotional individuals suffering as well as feeling pain, distress and anxiety and which have a right of ethical protection.