



April/May 2009

Animal-friendly vets

During visits to veterinary clinics that collaborate with animal protection groups in Shenzhen and Beijing in 2008, it appeared that there were concerns with welfare-related issues, such as handling animals in a stress-free way, and preventing infections. Even the use of painkillers and appropriate anaesthetics was not standard practice in a serious operation like neutering!

ACTAsia, together with members of the Australian group Vets Beyond Borders, provided training to 28 veterinarians and their assistants. They practised modern and more animal-friendly neutering techniques for dogs and cats.

Also importantly, more animals can now be neutered, because recovery takes less time. Recent evaluation showed that the number of neutering operations in clinics associated with the animal group ShenzhenCats increased by 67%.



June 2009

Dog culling: Hanzhong

When eight cases of human rabies occurred in Hanzhong City, in China's northwest Shaanxi Province, local authorities started the widespread killing of dogs in order to make the city a dog-free zone. An estimated 30,000 stray and owned dogs were killed indiscriminately in a few months time, by literally beating them to death.

ACTAsia took action when the news came out:

- We provided support to local groups at the scene where needed.
- We spread the word about this cruelty and called upon supporters to ask the Chinese government to stop this killing.
- We presented a document on 'A Case for Humane Rabies Control in China' to the Chinese authorities.
- Together with other international groups, we released a joint statement to ask for a ban on the killing and a move to alternative humane methods to eliminate rabies.
- We organised a conference on scientific and humane rabies control.

Rabies conference: Officials and experts oppose dog culling

In immediate response to the Hanzhong dog culling, ACTAsia for Animals took the lead in organising a forum in Beijing to discuss scientific and humane alternatives for rabies prevention and control in the country. Attendees included authorities from the Veterinary Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Centre for Animal Disease Control, officials from regional animal disease control centres, academics from related fields and animal welfare groups. Although dog culling has been common throughout China for decades, this is the first time that animal welfare groups have discussed this issue with relevant authorities and academics in a public setting.

The most positive and important outcome was that all attendees opposed the dog culling and agreed that the only effective way of eliminating rabies in dogs is through mass vaccination programmes.

ACTAsia has sent the conference proceedings and our document on the case for humane rabies control in China to all relevant central and provincial authorities that are in charge of rabies control and prevention throughout China, including health departments and animal disease control centres.



June 2009

Promoting animal welfare legislation in China

The millions of animals living in China are not protected by any law. But this might change now that an animal welfare law has been drafted by Chinese academics. We have to ensure that any legislation passed is as animal-friendly as possible. And as in any other country, the involvement of local animal protection groups is vital to take legislation forward. We addressed the important development of animal welfare legislation by:

1. Holding a forum for key stakeholders

We organised a forum where we brought together drafters, concerned academics and local animal protection groups for the first time, to exchange ideas on how to create and promote an effective animal protection law. Chinese experts presented the current situation of animals in China in different industries, including farming, vivisection, captive wildlife and companion animals. Experts from Canada, Hong Kong and Taiwan showed examples of the creation of legislation and enforcement issues in their regions. More than a hundred delegates attended the forum and feedback was largely positive.

2. Preparing animal protectionists

ACTAsia held its fourth annual workshop to build the capacity of local animal protectionists in China. This time, our major aim was to prepare them for the important role they have in promoting animal welfare legislation in their country. They took part in the forum mentioned above, and following the forum we addressed the ways they could promote their work - including legislation - among the public, the government and the media.

促进中国动物保护立法论坛暨
第四届可持续动物保护团队
训练营

Forum on Promoting
Animal Protection
Legislation in China
&
ACTAsia for Animals:
4th Annual Workshop
on Sustainable Advocacy



September 2009

Animal welfare legislation

In October the first draft animal protection legislation was released for public comments. The draft document is an unofficial proposal compiled by a team of Chinese law academics with the aim of promoting public discussion within China. Our China Manager, Isobel Zhang, represented ACTAsia at a forum organised by IFAW, to provide our feedback on the current draft and give suggestions on how to improve it.

In December, an English translation of the draft animal protection legislation became available, which can be found on our website.

More people need to know: "Animals have feelings too"

Chinese animal protection groups reach out to the public to get their message across. They go out on the streets; go to markets, schools and shops; and create their own events to reach people. Educational material is an extremely useful tool for campaigning. We have distributed 16,000 copies of three Chinese leaflets to animal protection groups across the country. Two leaflets contain information on the importance of neutering to prevent the suffering of animals ending up as strays. The other leaflet is about the fact that animals are sentient beings, and can experience joy, pain and fear. More awareness of this fact will hopefully lead to more compassion towards animals.



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