

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Formulating an animal-friendly policy”
moved by Hon CHAN Hak-kan
at the Legislative Council meeting
of Wednesday, 3 November 2010**

**Motion as amended by Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, Hon Fred LI Wah-ming,
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou, Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit and
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan**

That, given that the keeping of pets among Hong Kong people has become increasingly common, and there is also a growing concern about the rights of animals; however, the animal welfare policy in Hong Kong lags far behind the standards of other developed places in the world, and cases of animal cruelty keep occurring; tens of thousands of animals are euthanized every year, and there is still insufficient activity space for the integration of human beings and animals within the communities; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to formulate an ‘animal-friendly policy’ to ensure that the rights of animals can be safeguarded; the relevant policy measures should include:

- (a) by making reference to the present animal protection legislation in developed places, to review and amend the existing Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance for the purpose of catching up with international standards, and to classify the intentional abandonment of animals as animal cruelty, as well as to explore the provision of compulsory psychological counselling and courses on animal protection to convicted persons;
- (b) to establish ‘animal police’ teams specially tasked to investigate cases of animal cruelty and abandonment, enhance the training of frontline enforcement officers on handling cases of animal cruelty and their awareness of such cases, and set up a ‘dedicated hotline for reporting animal cruelty’, with a view to curbing the situation of animal cruelty and abandonment from becoming prevalent;
- (c) to request the Department of Justice to pay close attention to the sentencing for cases of animal cruelty, and where sentencing for the cases concerned cannot fully reflect their seriousness, to seek sentencing guidelines by applying for reviews of sentences to the relevant courts, so as to truly reflect the social concern about offences of animal cruelty;
- (d) to improve the existing management mechanism for the sale and registration of animals, including reviewing the licensing and regulatory mechanism for the sale and breeding of pets and stepping up the monitoring of the sources of animals, so as to combat problems such as unlicensed animal breeding, online sale and illicit animal import;

- (e) to improve the hygiene conditions in the animal management centres under the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and enhance the transparency of stray animal management by allowing Members and animal rights organizations to conduct regular inspections, increase the number of qualified animal adoption organizations and expand the scope of animals for adoption to reptiles and amphibians, so as to facilitate the adoption of animals by a greater number of people and organizations;
- (f) to co-operate with District Councils and animal rights organizations to fully implement the 'Trap-Neuter-Return' programme, employ animal capture devices that inflict the least injury, and use humane means to deal with the problem of stray cats and dogs;
- (g) to provide subsidy to the public for neutering their pets, and train more veterinary health care personnel to meet the social demand for the services concerned;
- (h) to introduce appropriate measures, including identifying sites in all districts in Hong Kong for constructing more parks for pets, and exploring the opening of various recreational venues such as parks and beaches partially or at specific time slots, so that members of the public can bring in their pets;
- (i) to actively identify suitable locations for the provision of public toilets for dogs, increase the number of dog excreta collection bins on street side and step up the frequency of cleaning and washing, with a view to improving environmental hygiene; at the same time, to step up inspection and prosecution against owners who indiscriminately allow their animals to excrete anywhere;
- (j) to explore the regulation of hospice service for animals through licensing;
- (k) to step up publicity and education for the public on animal care and responsible pet ownership, and set up an 'animal protection fund', so that organizations can make applications for organizing more animal welfare and adoption activities;
- (l) to enhance people's understanding of endangered animals and relevant regulatory systems, and require that animal traders must provide appropriate labels for identifying endangered species, as well as to provide buyers with points to note on keeping endangered species, with a view to strengthening the management of endangered animals;
- (m) to examine the extension of the microchipping and licensing schemes to cats, so as to help owners reclaim their missing cats, prevent the abandonment of cats by irresponsible owners and institute prosecutions against them;
- (n) to examine the establishment of public animal hospitals or clinics to provide pet owners with affordable animal treatment services; and

- (o) to examine the setting up of a mechanism for monitoring food products for pets and relevant labels, so as to safeguard the quality and safety of food products for pets;
- (p) to establish a licensing system for professional breeders to ensure that commercial breeders have adequate breeding knowledge and ethical standards;
- (q) to permit eligible members of the public to directly adopt animals; and
- (r) to explore the provision of subsidy to recognized animal adoption organizations, so that they can have sufficient resources for keeping abandoned animals, thereby reducing the number of animals eventually euthanized;
- (s) by making reference to and studying the successful experience of foreign places in protecting and conserving endangered wild animals, to adopt positive environmental conservation measures to salvage endangered wild animals in Hong Kong, such as Romer's tree frogs, black-faced spoonbills, common birdwings, Chinese grassbirds, Hong Kong newts, Chinese white dolphins and horseshoe crabs, so as to protect the precious ecological resources of Hong Kong; and
- (t) to join hands with the relevant District Councils, rural committees and conservation organizations to expeditiously explore various proper arrangements and measures on handling the miserable stray cattle in Hong Kong that are left to live or perish on their own, to provide support by allocating appropriate resources, and to tackle the relevant issues as early as possible through the following measures:
 - (i) to actively and expeditiously explore the identification of suitable sites for stray cattle in Hong Kong, so as to enable them to live in a safe and natural environment without having to wander around any more, while at the same time ensure the maximum safety of both human beings and cattle in their co-existence; besides, to actively explore the development of the above-mentioned sites as green eco-tourism projects;
 - (ii) to allocate resources for neutering the stray cattle in the New Territories, so as to avoid the incessant breeding of stray cattle; and
 - (iii) to actively study the introduction of effective measures, including providing additional resources to support those volunteers and non-profit-making voluntary organizations which are keen on adopting stray cattle in Hong Kong, so that they can have sufficient means to provide the stray cattle adopted by them with basic nutrition and attention;

- (u) to review and amend the policy on managing wild animals, so as to provide them with reasonable and safe room for survival, and at the same time protect the public from being disturbed or hurt; and
- (v) to co-operate with neighbouring regions, and step up the studies on and the monitoring of zoonotic diseases, in particular those transmittable to human beings, thereby protecting the health of animals while enhancing epidemic prevention;
- (w) to empower the court to issue orders forbidding repeated offenders or convicted persons involved in the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance and serious cases from keeping animals;
- (x) to set up animal shelters and adoption centres under the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, so as to reduce the need for euthanizing animals;
- (y) to examine, on humanitarian grounds, the enactment of legislation on prohibiting the breeding and importation of animal species suffering from genetic diseases that cause them pain, such as Scottish Folds suffering from osteochondrodysplasia;
- (z) to foster co-operation among the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the Lands Department, the Housing Department and other relevant government departments, so that when clearing villages, they will pay attention to the fact that residents therein normally keep a number of animals, and hence they should make a detailed record of all animals in the villages concerned before clearance, and strive to make timely and appropriate arrangements for animals that cannot follow their owners upon moving homes; and
- (aa) to examine the practice of allowing animal owners who are adequately equipped to board public transport with their animals;
- (ab) to advocate the responsibilities of keepers and owners, and ensure that both wild and domesticated animals can receive humane treatment; and
- (ac) to review the policy on the keeping of animals by public housing tenants.