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Submission to Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene: Meeting on 14 January 2014

TNR and Animal Cruelty

My name is Dr John Wedderburn, I am speaking on behalf of the East Asian Branch of AELLA, the Alliance for Earth, Life, Liberty & Advocacy.

For more than 15 years I have - in various capacities - been trying to persuade AFCD of the merits of desexing in general and TNR in particular. The demerits of Catch and Kill and the merits of Catch and Return have always been very clear to me but seem to be beyond the understanding of our Government Animal Control Department. The detailed arguments have been clearly laid out to AFCD hundreds of times over the years and are being ably laid out today by my NGO colleagues. I just wish to say that Killing only works very short term whereas Desexing is an effective long term solution. If only AFCD would convert their killing houses into desexing clinics, Hong Kong's dog and cat problems could be solved permanently and within a very few years and much money saved. Today, however, we are not asking for AFCD to do this - it is obvious that they do not have the mental capacity to grasp the logic. Instead, all we are asking for is for them to get out of the way - stop obstructing the organisations that are willing to do the work for them. They must cease their vindictive and senseless prosecutions of TNR Volunteers. And the trials are a stupid waste of time. They are so hedged around with conditions that they will never prove anything. And there is no need to prove anything, it has all been proved before. For dogs in many overseas countries; for cats even in Hong Kong itself.

Finally Animal Cruelty. AFCD has had many recommendations put before them over the years. I recall in particular this Panel discussing Animal Cruelty in 2006 and 2008. Unfortunately AFCD has chosen to dicker about with minor amendments instead of proposing the comprehensive new legislation recommended by their own committees. The 2010 Review of Animal Welfare Legislation by Professor Whitfort and Dr Woodhouse has been ignored. It is time for action.