

## **Animal Earth**

Submission to Legco Panel of Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

### **“Trap-Neuter-Return” (TNR)**

1. Animal Earth fully supports TNR as a more scientific and more humane way than “catch-and-kill” to control population of stray and feral dogs.
2. Animal Earth welcomes the Government’s proposal to support the current TNR trial programmes proposed by AWOs.
3. To more holistically address the issue of dogs population and public health, all TNR dogs should be vaccinated against rabies.
4. Apart from dog population control, TNR should be taken as a proactive measure against possible rabies outbreak, especially in view of the close proximity to and increased human activities with Mainland. To this end, micro-chipping and vaccination of all owned dogs should be enforced and assisted by the Government.
5. To more accurately gauge the effectiveness of TNR in controlling population, the “number of complaints” should not be used as a measure of success because number of complaints can be caused by numerous intervening factors unrelated to birth rates of the dogs involved. Complaints could be caused by lack of knowledge or understanding which should be addressed by public education.
6. Government should take on the biggest share of TNR programmes in terms of resources and expertise. AWOs should only play assistive and advisory roles.
7. Significantly more effort by the Government should be put into educating the public on TNR.
8. The terminology “catch and remove”, as used in Government papers

and documents when referring to the “catch and kill” policy, should be replaced by “catch and kill” to accurately reflect the fact. The act of killing should NOT be disguised from the public.

9. From time to time, AFCD prosecutes TNR volunteers just for rescuing dogs from government kennels. The Government should stop such prosecution immediately and, instead, issue guidelines to facilitate volunteers’ rescue work, if the Government is in a *“proactive spirit to respond to calls for trying out TNR”*, as stated in the Government’s paper.

### **Handling of animal cruelty cases**

10. Animal Earth maintains that BOTH of the following should be carried out in parallel to better combat animal cruelty:
  - (a) Setting up special enforcement units – so-called “animal police” with the necessary resources, expertise, authority, and attitude to improve enforcement of relevant laws; and
  - (b) Overhauling current laws related to animal cruelty, for example, by enacting a comprehensive animal protection ordinance

There is no conflict at all between (a) and (b) above.

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