



WSAVA Animal Wellness and Welfare Committee

Companion Animal Population Management

WSAVA is aware that there are companion animal overpopulation issues throughout the world. There are many reasons for this including inadequate spay/neuter programs, lack of effective animal care and control policies, as well as a need for education and awareness of the responsibilities of pet ownership. Animal welfare needs to be a strong focus when developing solutions.

It is appropriate for a just and moral society to consider animals as sentient beings and that we are obligated to take their welfare into account when formulating plans that affect them. There are many examples of society making wrong choices on how to handle overpopulation of domestic pets and some of these choices are inhumane and ineffective.

The International Companion Animal Management (ICAM) Coalition has developed protocols for the humane management of cat and dog populations. WSAVA has a strong relationship with many animal organizations throughout the world and we would like to offer ICAM's solution as a good example of how population management can be conducted in a humane manner, leading to improvement in the welfare of the companion animal population as a whole.

www.icam-coalition.org/downloads/ICAM-Humane_cat_population.PDF

www.icam-coalition.org/downloads/Humane_Dog_Population_Management_Guidance_English.pdf

In the event that euthanasia is needed, it is critical that this be carried out in a humane manner by trained personnel. The WSAVA Animal Wellness & Welfare Committee suggests that the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) document "AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals: 2013 Edition" be referred to as a resource on acceptable methods of euthanasia for various species including companion animals.

www.avma.org/KB/Policies/Documents/euthanasia-highres.pdf