



---

# The new TAHC Chapter 7.7 on dog population management

---

**Paolo Dalla Villa**

Technical Officer - Disaster Management and Animal Welfare  
WOAH Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels

April the 23rd, Qatar

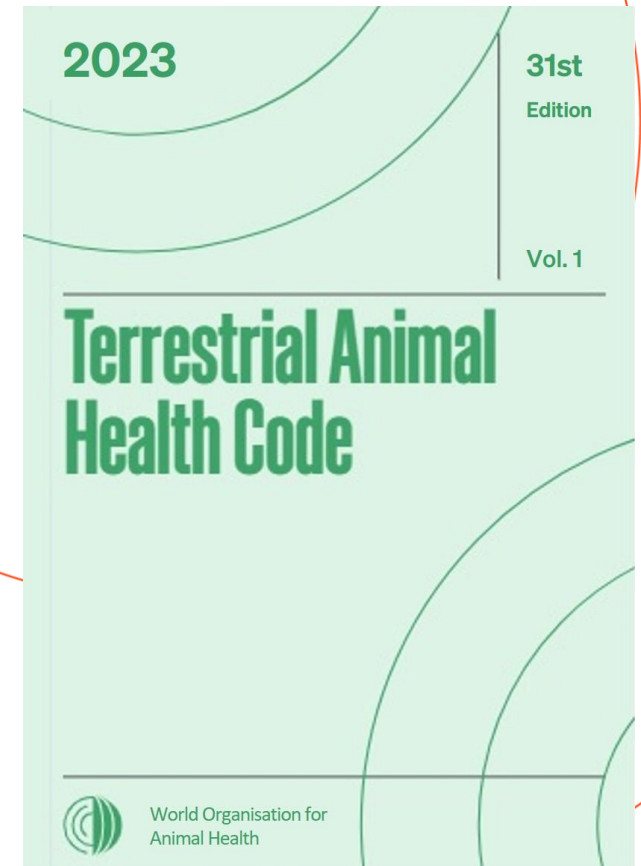
---



# The new TAHC Chapter 7.7 on Dog Population Management

Adopted at the 89th WOAHA General Session (23-27 May 2022)

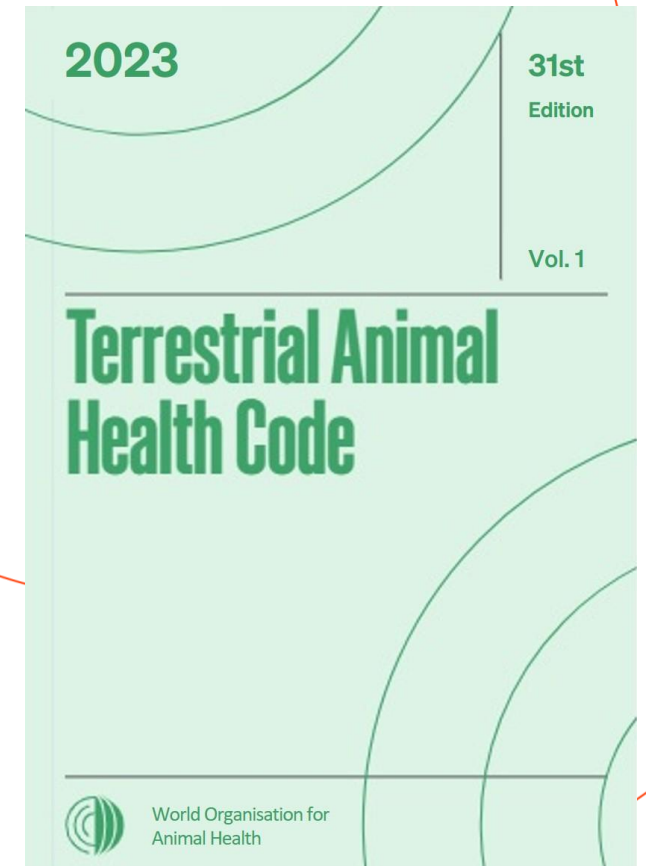
- ✓ The **scope was redefined** to focus on the welfare of dogs when implementing DPM programmes **aiming at improving human health and safety**, animal health and animal welfare and minimizing their potential negative socio-economic and environmental impacts
- ✓ The **objectives reworded and updated** to take into consideration the WOAHA activities around **dog-mediated human rabies**
- ✓ The **terminology was harmonised** to be consistent with other TAHC Chapters
- ✓ **New articles** were added and reorganised to address the **wider scope** (i.e., roles and responsibilities) and to ensure **most up-to-date guidance**





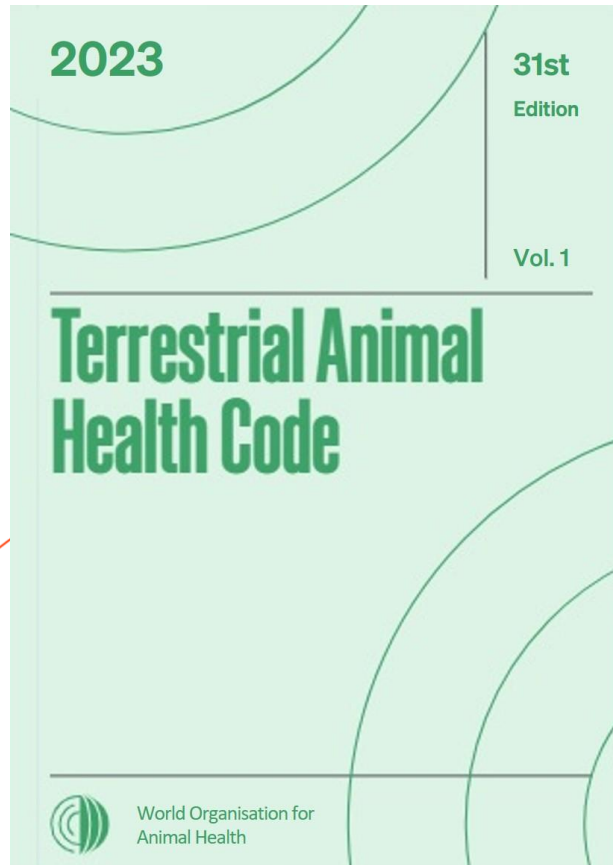
The WOAH TAHC Chapter 7.7 **Dog Population Management (DPM)** refers to the "holistic approach that aims to improve the welfare of dogs, reduce problems they may present (free-roaming, attacks to humans and other animals, zoonotic diseases dissemination, environmental pollution, damage to properties, wildlife hybridization), and create harmonious co-existence with people and their environment"

***A FREE-ROAMING DOG is "any owned or unowned dog that is without direct human supervision or control, including feral dogs"***



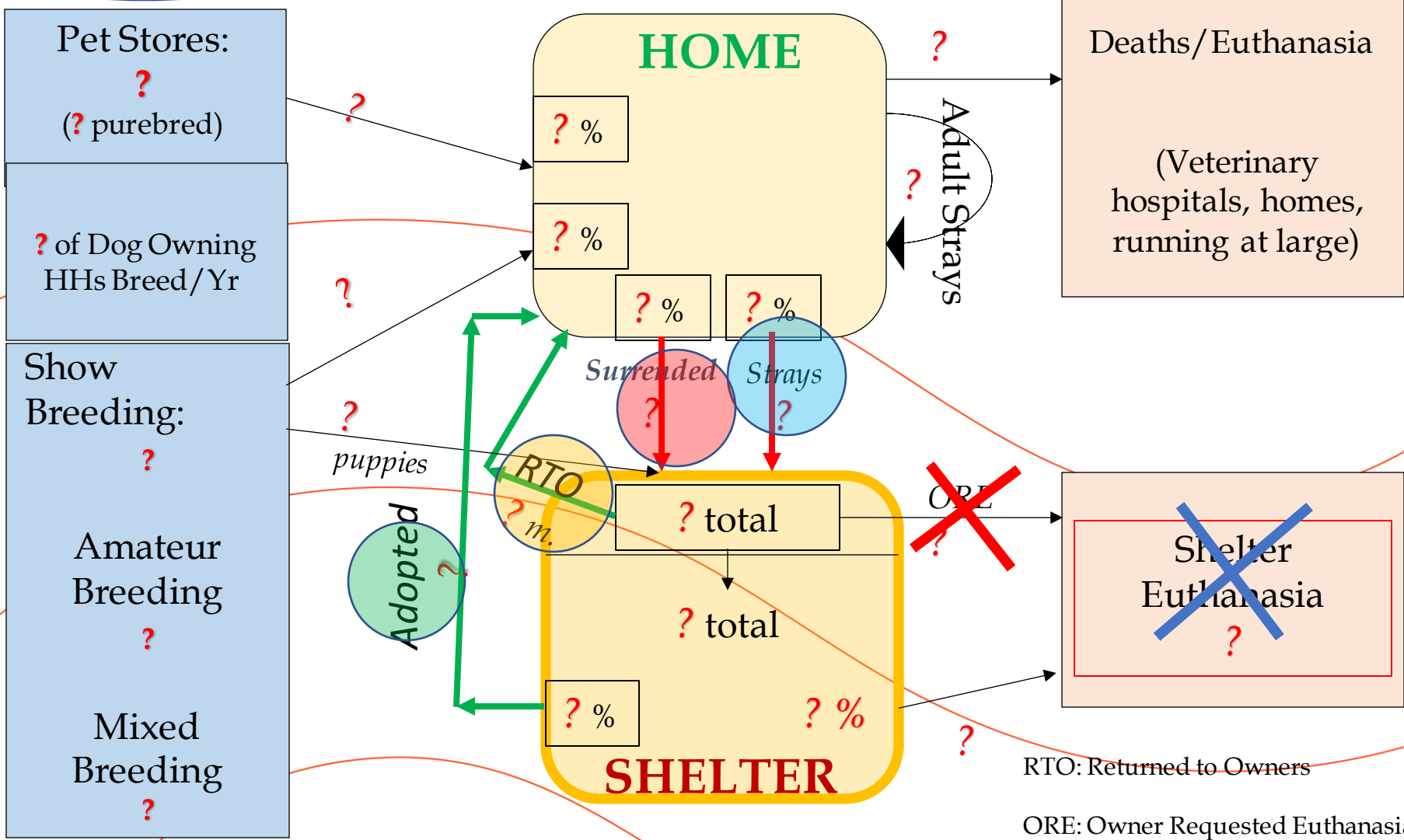
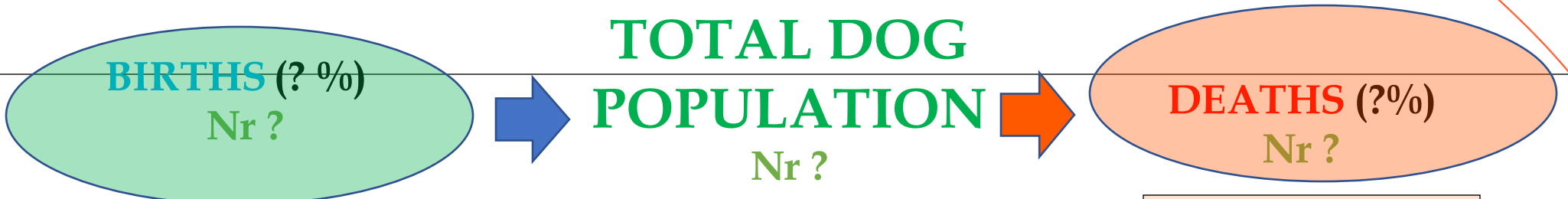


# Guiding principles (Art 7.7.4)



- **DPM has direct benefits to public health and safety, and to animal health and welfare.**
- Dogs are a domesticated species and therefore dependent on human communities, thus **there is an ethical responsibility** to ensure their health and welfare even in the absence of ownership.
- The owned dog population is a common source of free-roaming dogs, **DPM programmes should consider all dogs.**
- Dog ecology is linked with human activities, therefore DPM should be accompanied by changes in human behaviour, including **promotion of Responsible Ownership.**
- **Local dog population dynamics and community attitudes is a key element** in determining whether and how DPM programmes might contribute to rabies control and which tools would be most successful.
- DPM programmes should be **individually tailored to local and national contexts**, and they should be designed to be **sustainable, aligned with legislative requirements, evaluated and adaptable.**







**Dog Population Management (DPM) programme** means a combination of measures that **enhance the care of dogs and influence dog population dynamics** to sustainably improve dog health and welfare, public health and safety, and the environment, while taking into consideration related economic benefits and costs.

Article 7.7.8. Other organisations and actors involved in Dog Population Management  
**Veterinary Services** should play an active role and coordinate their activities with relevant *Competent Authorities*, and **may be responsible for the organisation, implementation and supervision of DPM programmes.**

# The revised TAHC Chapter 7.7 on dog population management

Article 7.7.1. Introduction

Article 7.7.2. Definitions

Article 7.7.3. Scope

Article 7.7.4. Guiding principles

Article 7.7.5. Dog Population Management objectives

Article 7.7.6. Roles and responsibilities

Article 7.7.7. Competent Authority for Dog Population Management (DPM)

Article 7.7.8. Other organizations and actors involved in DPM

Article 7.7.9. Regulatory framework

Article 7.7.10. Evidence-based programme development

Article 7.7.11. DPM programme assessment and planning

Article 7.7.12. Monitoring and evaluation

Article 7.7.13. Recommendations for DPM measures

Article 7.7.14. Registration and identification of dogs

Article 7.7.15. Regulation of commercial dog breeding and sale

Article 7.7.16. Control of national and international (export or import) dog movements

Article 7.7.17. Promoting responsible dog ownership

Article 7.7.18. Reproductive control

Article 7.7.19. Catch, neuter, vaccination and return

Article 7.7.20. Reuniting and adoption

Article 7.7.21. Access to veterinary care

Article 7.7.22. Environmental controls

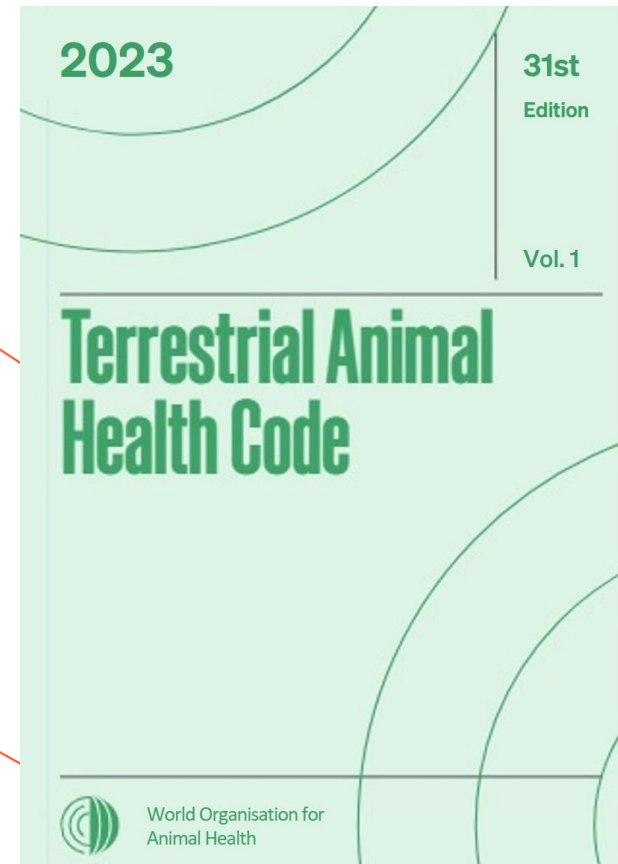
Article 7.7.23. Educating in safe dog-human interaction

Article 7.7.24. Specific considerations for DPM

Article 7.7.25. Capture and handling

Article 7.7.26. Housing

Article 7.7.27. Euthanasia







# The national action plan

## Article 7.7.7. Competent Authority for Dog Population Management

**DPM occurs at the local level** through specific **DPM programmes**, whose success requires a **supportive and enabling environment** created by the *Competent Authority* (normally the **Veterinary Authority**) at the national level.

### Governance

A **national action plan** provides the details of actions which support the implementation of DPM programmes and coordinate with other action plans, such as those focused on dog-related zoonoses. These plans are led by this *Competent Authority* and developed in collaboration with the multi-sectorial group.

### Legislation

Implementation of DPM programmes requires the support of a **suitable regulatory framework** (see Article 7.7.9.). Further **secondary regulations** provide customisations to suit local requirements.

### Enforcement

The *Competent Authority* can support enforcement of legislation **through guidelines on enforcement procedures/practices, training and funding of enforcement agencies**, and defining **penalties**.

### Funding

To establish sustainable DPM with long-lasting impacts, the *Competent Authority* and multi-sectorial group should establish a policy and legislative basis for sufficient funding of national action plans and DPM programmes. The One Health concept strengthens the argument for increasing the priority of **DPM across the animal health, environmental and public health sectors**.

### Training and support

To support DPM programmes, the **relevant *Competent Authority* should lead on the training of professionals, including veterinarians**, and ensure they have access to appropriate *veterinary medicinal products* for the implementation of DPM measures. The *Competent Authority* should support DPM through national level communication and education initiatives.

A **template for the drafting of a National Action Plan** has been developed in the frame of the WOAAH Platform on AW for Europe activities.

It can be used to create such an **"enabling environment"** for the operational implementation of **tailor-made DPM programmes at local level**

The image shows a two-page document titled "DRAFT TEMPLATE to be discussed in SDB3". The header includes the OIE Platform logo and the text "Improving animal welfare in Europe by empowering Veterinary Services to take action in compliance with OIE standards". The main title is "Veterinary Services national plan to support local governmental authorities in the development and implementation of dog population control programmes (DPCPs)".

**Context - what are we trying to achieve?**

**Chapter 7.7 on stray dog population control** of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (TAHC), adopted in 2006, describes the general guiding principles, objectives, control measures and monitoring and evaluation of dog population control programmes (DPCPs). It also recommends the establishment of an Advisory Group to develop such programmes, composed of various experts and relevant stakeholders, to analyse and identify the problem, identify the causes, obtain public opinion on dogs and propose the most effective approaches to solve in the shortest long-term.

In 2015, OIE and WHO, together with FAO and GIZ, also adopted the **Global Framework for the elimination of dog-mediated rabies** by 2030, with a companion Strategic Plan. The Framework is based on 3 pillars (socio-cultural, technical, organisation, political and resources).

Under the **OIE Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe**, Balkan countries agreed to reach full compliance with Chapter 7.7 by 2025 (sub-regional vision). OIE therefore established a **Working Group on Stray Dog Population Control** for 11 Balkan countries, to support and monitor progress towards the achievement of the vision.

In the 2015 and second 2016 self-assessments were conducted by Balkan countries using the OIE Self-assessment and Monitoring Tool (Self Tool). Results, obtained by OIE and 20161 Teramo in national stray dog Reports, showed a low level of compliance as regards the analysis of the situation, the control measures in place and their monitoring. Rabies (except recently incorporated in the Self Tool) showed the dog-mediated rabies situation in the Balkans is acceptable but vigilance must remain high in light of rabies situation prevailing in wildlife, despite important control efforts (oral vaccination of foxes).

In majority of the countries in the Balkans and Turkey as shown from the first and second country self-assessments, municipal authorities have competency and responsibility for stray dog population control. The Veterinary Services, in their public can play a limited role – except when a national framework or scheme (legislation, MR, databases, rabies mass vaccination, etc.) is needed – and coordinate between the central and local level is insufficient so as result stray dog population control remains locally managed, uncoordinated, unharmonized and uncoordinated across the country, and the Veterinary Authority does not get the broad picture at the central level to monitor progress at the national level (or across the country).

Important roles in stray dog population control are yet to be played by the Veterinary Authority – that is, responsible for the implementation of animal health and animal welfare legislation, in coordination with other competent government agencies and institutions – and current sub-optimal results obtained by Balkan countries – despite some remarkable efforts decided locally – may actually be the result of insufficient involvement and/or clarity of the Veterinary Authority.

**Specific contributions could include, but not be limited to:**

1. Provide the legal basis for stray dog population control (and rabies) in line with OIE standards;
2. Provide technical advice with specialized expertise in regard to public health, animal welfare and animal health to the local governmental authorities for effective design, implementation and monitoring of DPCPs in line with OIE Standards;
3. Coordinate DPCPs at national level to ensure the sustainability and efficiency of efforts made locally with harmonized and well-understood terminology and concepts (in any/all applicable languages);
4. Monitor the operational implementation of DPCPs at international level with a view to getting a greater understanding of the whole country situation based on local efforts and achieve national objectives (control by 2025).

**It should be necessary (adequately) supported leverage some resources (financial, human and/or technical) to ensure the success of DPCPs.**

In other words, this could be described as how the Veterinary Authority can create an accountable, sustainable and enabling environment (see graph below, red + yellow frameworks) for stray dog population control to be implemented by local governmental authorities (municipalities, with the necessary external coordination in place).

The OIE Platform Secretariat therefore established a small stray dog Task Force to draft a Template for a Veterinary Services national plan to support local governmental authorities in the development and implementation of DPCPs in compliance with OIE Chapter 7.7, and ensure their monitoring. It suggests a possible outline on how to structure such Plan by giving the identification of possible objectives, activities and associated costs to be undertaken in the next 5 to 7 years with the overall objective to achieve full compliance with OIE Chapter 7.7 by 2025. The activities proposed in the Plan exclusively concern those of the Veterinary Authority, for the activities to be implemented by the local governmental authorities, reference should be made to the **Global Framework on Stray Dog Population Control** and **Guide to Eliminating Dog-Mediated Rabies** (see [http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/whodoc/document.asp?doc\\_id=12345](http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/whodoc/document.asp?doc_id=12345)).

The Template will be discussed with countries during the third workshop of the OIE regional stray dog Roadmap for Balkan countries (SDB3), held in Sarajevo in June 2016 and countries concerned shall be account into a revised version of the Template. It is recommended that Balkan countries use the Template to prepare their OIE national plan to support local governmental authorities in the development and implementation of DPCPs before the end of 2016. The quality of the Plan will be assessed by the stray dog Task Force. However, it is important to note that political commitment to support the Plan must be secured to ensure its adequate implementation and funding once developed.

Should countries in the Balkans, according to the Template, could secure the purpose of a national OIE regional, self-declared, decision.

**Summary of main terms used (OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code):**

Animal welfare	Means how an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives. An animal in a good state of welfare (as indicated by scientific evidence) is healthy;
----------------	---



## Article 7.7.10. Evidence-based DPM programme development

With **initial assessment and ongoing adaptation** based on **continued monitoring and evaluation** using objective methods and to be conducted with the involvement of advisory groups and relevant authorities.

*Competent Authorities*, in collaboration with the multi-sectoral group, should support evidence-based DPM programmes by:

- **identifying qualified personnel and developing training and tools** to help with implementing data collection (assessment and *monitoring*) and use (planning and evaluation);
- **ensuring the budget of DPM programmes including the costs for the initial assessment -> *monitoring and evaluation***;
- **establishing standardised indicators** with feasible and repeatable methods of measurement that can be used across locations and over time, to **support subsequent evaluations and compare performance between different DPM programmes**.
- **encouraging the use of monitoring data for evaluation**, learning and subsequent amendments of DPM programmes.



## DPM programmes objectives (Art 7.7.5)

### May include the following objectives:

- promote and establish **responsible dog ownership**;
- **improve health and welfare** of dog populations;
- reduce the number of **free-roaming dogs**;
- **stabilise the dog population** by reducing turnover;
- reduce **risks to public health and safety** including dog bites, traffic accidents, and zoonotic diseases such as rabies, leishmaniosis and echinococcosis;
- contribute towards **eradicating dog-mediated human rabies**;
- **reduce nuisance** caused by *free-roaming dogs*;
- **prevent harm to livestock** and other animals;
- **prevent illegal trade** and trafficking of dogs.



## Article 7.7.13. Recommendations for DPM measures

A **combination of the following measures** should be used for a successful DPM programme:

- **registration and identification** of dogs (Art. 7.7.14)
- regulation of **commercial dog breeding and sale**(Art. 7.7.15)
- control of national and international (export and import) dog movements(Art. 7.7.16)
- promoting **responsible dog ownership**(Art. 7.7.17)
- **reproductive** control(Art. 7.7.18)
- **'Catch, Neuter, Vaccinate and Return'**(Art. 7.7.19)
- **reuniting and adoption**(Art. 7.7.20)
- access to **veterinary care**(Art. 7.7.21)
- **environmental** controls(Art. 7.7.22)
- **education** on safe dog-human interaction(Art. 7.7.23)

**To be implemented in accordance with the national context and local circumstances.**



## Article 7.7.11. DPM programme assessment and planning

The initial DPM programme development stages of assessment and planning should provide **the evidence required for planning and include:**

- ✓ **Review of the current regulatory framework** and evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of DPM control measures
- ✓ **Identification of the priority issues** from the perspective of all relevant stakeholders.
- ✓ **Exploration of dog population dynamics** in the whole dog population (not limited to the current free-roaming dog population) **to identify the sources of free-roaming dogs.**
- ✓ **Identification of people's knowledge, attitudes and practices** regarding dog care and responsibility for owned dogs and unowned dogs.
- ✓ **Estimation of dog population size and demography.** Accuracy of estimates is typically improved with more time-consuming methods and greater local engagement (with available methods for dog population size estimates)



# Article 7.7.12. DPM programme monitoring and evaluation

DPM programmes' **monitoring and evaluation indicators/measurables**:

- **Owned dog population size, demographics**
- **Free-roaming dog population density**, demography (age, sex, sterilisation, lactating females and puppies) and welfare (e.g. body condition score and, presence of a skin problem)
- **Prevalence of zoonotic diseases** in both the animal and human populations (I.e., rabies and or echinococcosis Echinococcus Chapter 8.14. and Chapter 8.5).
- **Knowledge, attitudes and practices of communities** relating to the free-roaming dog population, attitudes and practices of regarding **responsible dog ownership**.
- **Dog population movements** from owned to unowned dogs or from confined to free-roaming dogs
- **Reuniting facility performance** (I.e., intake, adoption rates, welfare state of dogs, mortality and euthanasia rates)
- **Dog bites** or number of **rabies post-exposure prophylaxis courses** provided to the exposed individuals, or the **cost incurred by the public health authorities**
- **Number and nature of complaints about dogs** to local government authorities.
- **Compensation costs relating to dog-related damages** to people, livestock, or property



## Specific considerations for DPM activities (Art 7.7.24)

The implementation of the DPM measures may require:

Capture and handling (Art 7.7.25)

Housing (Art 7.7.26)

Euthanasia - To be conducted under the supervision of a veterinarian (Art 7.7.27)

***“the act of inducing death using a method that causes a rapid and irreversible loss of consciousness with minimum pain and distress to animal” (WOAH TAHC Glossary)***





## Article 7.7.9. Regulatory framework

**Legislation is a key element** for the sustainability and efficiency of DPM programmes, and may be found in a DPM regulatory framework (designed with both incentives and penalties and adapted to the national context) or other regulatory frameworks:

- ✓ owners' obligations regarding the principles of **Responsible Dog Ownership**, including animal welfare;
- ✓ **animal welfare obligations of Authorities**;
- ✓ **registration and identification** of dogs in an animal identification system;
- ✓ **registration, or authorisation and licensing** of dog breeders and sellers, dog shelters, rehoming centres and holding facilities;
- ✓ **licensing of veterinarians**, preparation, use and sale of veterinary medicinal products;
- ✓ **preventive measures against rabies and other zoonotic diseases**;
- ✓ **dog movements** and trade at international and national levels;
- ✓ **waste management**



# The actors





# PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN THE BALKANS

Progressive decreasing of dog abandonment on the streets  
Sustainable dog population management in whole region

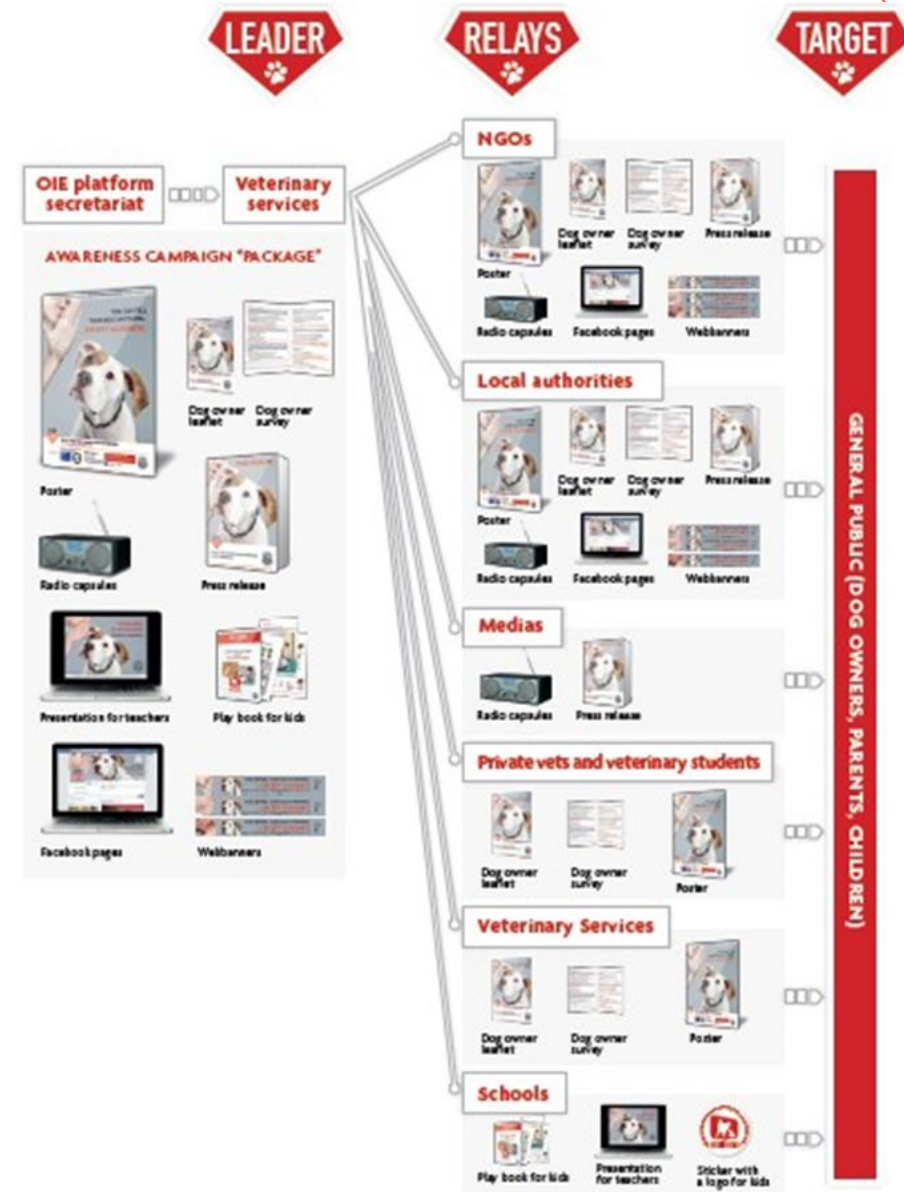




- Campaign leaders (nationally)
  - WOAH Delegate
  - WOAH Focal Point for AW
  - WOAH Focal Point for COM

- Stakeholders
  - local authorities
  - private veterinarians
  - pet shops
  - schools
  - non-governmental organizations
  - journalists

- Target audience
  - General public (dog owners, parents, children)





**KVIZ: POROK VOJITE KAZINA O SVOM PSU**

Kazin je najbolje mesto na kojem pas treba da odmoriti i opustiti!

- Na klupe na otvorenom prostoru
- U kulu, tamo da ima hladno mesto za odmor
- Na klupe, tamo da ima hladno mesto za odmor

Kazin treba biti mesto za pasu u dvorani kućice.

- Tamo da pas može da se odmoriti i opustiti.
- Tamo da pas može da se odmoriti i opustiti.
- Tamo da pas može da se odmoriti i opustiti.

Kazin je najbolje mesto za pasu u dvorani kućice.

- Pas ne treba da se odmoriti u kulu.
- Pas ne treba da se odmoriti u kulu.
- Pas ne treba da se odmoriti u kulu.



**Volim pasu je najbolje mesto na kojem pas treba da odmoriti i opustiti!**

**KVIZ: KAKO SE BRINITE O ZDRAVLJU SVOG PSA?**

Koliko često treba voditi pasu kod veterinara?

- Nikada.
- Jednom godišnje.
- Jednom godišnje.

Da li možete da pas treba da bude identifikovan (čipovan ili obojen)?

- Da.
- Ne.

Koliko često vodite pasu na promene kože?

- Nikada.
- Jednom godišnje.
- Jednom godišnje.

Da li možete da pas treba da bude identifikovan (čipovan ili obojen)?

- Da.
- Ne.



**Volim pasu je najbolje mesto na kojem pas treba da odmoriti i opustiti!**



**MIKI I KAZA**

Ovo je Miki. On ima dve godinje. On je veliki pas.

On je veliki pas. On ima dve godinje. On je veliki pas.



**Volim pasu je najbolje mesto na kojem pas treba da odmoriti i opustiti!**

**KVIZ: VESTINE VASES DUPEREKCIJA**

Otkrijte da vam je pasu najbolje mesto na kojem pas treba da odmoriti i opustiti!

- Pasu treba da se odmoriti u kulu.
- Pasu treba da se odmoriti u kulu.
- Pasu treba da se odmoriti u kulu.



**Volim pasu je najbolje mesto na kojem pas treba da odmoriti i opustiti!**

Courtesy: Bulgaria



Courtesy: Republic of North Macedonia

# WITHIN AND BEYOND EUROPE

Five overseas departments of France





# Recommendations

- ✓ Engage with **WOAH and other rabies stakeholders** to support national rabies control efforts
- ✓ Use existing **guidelines and resources**
- ✓ DPM interventions should **target the root causes of the problem, sources of dogs need to be identified and addressed**, rather than just focus on measures targeting the existing free-roaming dog population.
- ✓ It is essential to establish a **long-term and sustainable approach** to deal effectively with DPM issues, **Dog Population Management strategies** should be based on the implementation of actionable **National Action Plans** and tailor-made **DPM programmes** at local level
- ✓ DPM requires a **systematic, comprehensive, coordinated and progressive approach** to be **constantly monitored and evaluated**
- ✓ **Sustainability** is key and must be based on **Dog Responsible Ownership**, as long as a community will share the living environment with companion animals, there will be always the risk for public health and security, as well as the need to address animal welfare issues according to the WOAHA standards.





# CHALLENGES

- **Complexity of animal welfare**, with important scientific, ethical, cultural, religious, economic and political dimensions
- Dog populations pose **different animal welfare, public health and safety issues**
- **WOAH standards are not legislation**, they need to be adapted to local conditions
- Need to address **DPM from One-Health perspective**, to the benefit of humans and animals!





World  
Organisation  
for Animal  
Health  
Founded in 1924

Organisation  
mondiale  
de la santé  
animale  
Fondée en 1924

Organización  
Mundial  
de Sanidad  
Animal  
Fundada en 1924



World  
Organisation  
for Animal  
Health

Organisation  
mondiale  
de la santé  
animale

Organización  
Mundial  
de Sanidad  
Animal

# Animal welfare: a vital asset for a more sustainable world

Vision Paper



World Organisation  
for Animal Health  
Founded in 1924