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PILOT PROJECT CAT CASTRATION
IN THE GERMAN STATE SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN

Summary

The Pilot project in general

In Schleswig-Holstein, a state of the Federal Republic of Germany in the North, the estimated number of stray cats there is 75.000 animals, whereas the cats in private households are estimated for around 300.000.

In October 2014 the Ministry for Energy change, Agriculture, Environment and rural affairs of Schleswig-Holstein has published a common pilot project against the suffering of the stray cats. Partners of this public private project are the State, municipalities, Animal Welfare Organisations and veterinary organisations of this region. The project started in October 2014 und will be finished 31 December 2015. There are planned three action phases until autumn 2015 and it shall be seen as an initiative that is planned to grow, if the validation end of the year 2015 will demand that.

The Goals

The overall goal is to reduce in a significant way the number of stray cats and their suffering, to have less animals found and brought to shelters, to reduce the costs for the community and AWO caused by stray cats, to minimize the negative effects for wild birds and small rodents, and finally to change the consciousness of keepers of cats for letting the cats with access to outdoor neutered.

Within the pilot project, a number of 5.000 cats has to be neutered, identified and registered. Most of the veterinarians are in the meantime registering them in a specific register of TASSO.

Finally a project for promoting responsible cat ownership – as also stray cats are owned by the public means by the municipalities.

The partners

The Project is a public private partnership where partners are the following:

- State of Schleswig-Holstein, the ministry for energy change, agriculture and rural affairs
- The organization of municipalities of Schleswig-Holstein
- The regional administration of Schleswig-Holstein
- The (regional) Deutscher Tierschutzbund of Schleswig-Holstein
- The (regional) Veterinary Chamber of Schleswig-Holstein
- The (regional) Hunting Association of Schleswig-Holstein

Budget and finance administration

There is a common funds which started with 150 000 €, composed by public money of the State, by private money (NGOs) and private donors. There is also a non direct donation by veterinarians, who are dispensing their honorary by 25 €/neutering, so has the value of 125 000 € for 5.000 cats.

The treatment of the cats (neutering, chipping, registration) is for free for all male and female cats, brought by a shelter to a veterinarian, is also for free for keepers who can prove that they are living by national assistance.

Nevertheless all other keepers who bring their cats for this treatment to a veterinarian will receive a grant by the funds of 25 €.

The financial procedure is done directly by the veterinarians and they are rendering account directly per month. The budget is managed and under responsibility of the Ministry and is a transparent admin model of reporting and controlling.

Structure and time schedule

The pilot project runs from 15 October 2014 until 31 December 2015. F

There are planned three periods of action:

Test phases: 15 October 2014 to 14 November 2014

Spring action: 15 February 2015 until 31 March 2015

Autumn action: 1 to 30 September 2015.

Other measures

The Ministry is leading the communication management, there is a subdomain of the ministry's website. There have been produced posters and within the actions phases media work is done

The website is: www.gegenkatzenelend.schleswig-holstein.de (in German)

First results

In the test phases (15 October to 14 November 2014) already 2.754 cats have been reached. 65% of them are stray cats 24% from private persons living from national assistance and 11% of keepers in other conditions.

In the spring action phases (2 February until 23 February 2015) the action had to be finished four days earlier, as the funds was already empty. This means that this project is a huge success and the citizens could be sensibilized and convinced. In this last period from 2. February to 20 February 2015 a number of 2.220 cats have been neutered, chipped and registered, 58% of them were stray cats. Fortunately there were several private donations so the project could be done until now with more animals than planned.

Status quo and next steps

As there is a huge interest and a strong demand, and at the same time a readiness of the citizens to support this project, the autumn action is planned with the project partners, and they try to get more sponsors to be able to continue this project with more cats.