



საქართველოს ცხოველთა დაცვისა და გადარჩენის საზოგადოება
Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals

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**To Parliament of Georgia
Committee of the Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources**

“Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” – GSPSA on review of draft version of law of Georgia on “Domestic Resident Animals” (comments and suggestions)

“Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” analyzed draft law on “Domestic Resident Animals”. Unfortunately, the time for review and elaboration of comments and suggestions was very scarce – as the Committee of the Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources stipulated (20 calendar days). We think that working on comments and suggestions requires reasonable timeframe (at least 60 calendar days), which could have enabled us to study the document in more detail and provide you with fuller opinion, suggestions and comments.

After becoming acquainted with the draft law in this restricted timeline, “Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” has the following comments:

Firstly, regulations as defined by the mentioned draft bill do not facilitate resolution and delegation of animal welfare related problems. The bill needs significant rework, review and elaboration.

The draft bill omits many important topics, i.e. competence and obligations of any state body towards animals throughout the country, issuing permits for adopting pets for future owners, animal confiscation, issues related to lost and found animals, liquidation rules of shelters, etc. Some articles of the draft bill require major changes, professional omissions and incompleteness is obvious. Based on the contents of the draft, the main objective of the law is ambiguous. As a result of such incomplete regulations the existing difficult situation will be aggravated, populations will become more uncontrolled, the quantities of stray animals will increase, animal rights will be violated more, the area of disease distribution will increase along with animal cruelty and mistreatment. The fewer members of population who are interested in rescue and welfare of animals, will become distrustful towards state bodies. Naturally, if the bill is passed, budget funds will be spent in vain, because there are no means to actually improve population control in the law.

It should be outlined that the draft does not even mention any centralized state body in the form of state agency or unit under such agency, which will coordinate and be accountable for these issues. It means

that important issues remain the problem of municipalities who of course are not able to regulate them effectively.

Based on the above mentioned, the draft law requires revisions and major work with inclusion of professionals, non-governmental organizations and members of society. Ignoring and not involving the public in this complex issues will result in discomfort, confrontation and other conflicting difficulties. The authorities should cooperate with the public and most importantly animal protection organizations.

Hence, “Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” thinks that the draft bill requires elaboration. If not, the situation and welfare of animals will not improve – moreover, already complex and unregulated conditions will worsen and chaotic processes will be provoked.

Unfortunately, the draft bill is a very negative version of normative act, which contradicts with international conventions, while some of articles are unconstitutional. The draft bill violates animal rights guaranteed by international regulations and standards along with human rights as set out in Georgian constitution.

International organizations, specialists should be invited to work on the bill. International best practice and recommendations should be incorporated. The sphere of regulation of the law should be identified and for each direction detailed rules and best practices should be introduced.

Processes should be written out in transparent manner with reference to minutes and other documents as needed.

Animal protection issues should be popularized. Informational direction is very important, establishment of unified information system and base is crucial.

Step-by-step introduction of shelter standards should be facilitated while international best practice should be thought after and incorporated, harmonious co-existence of human and domestic companion animals guaranteed with respective environment and development of such environment. Animal protection organizations and persons should be actively involved in the works related to the draft bill.

The existing wording of the law is very unclear, does not contain enough details and does not serve interests of either humans or domestic companion animals.

We think that Committee of the Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources should establish working group consisting of professionals, while international and local organizations should be invited with the aim to elaborate legislative package reflecting the reality of our country and improve harmonious co-existence of human and animal.

“Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” is sending you our comments and suggestions on the draft bill on “Domestic Resident Animals”. We think that if these comments and suggestions are reviewed, worked upon and incorporated in the text, the draft bill will become fuller and further work could become possible.

“Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” is ready to work on the draft bill to make it better along with other non-governmental organizations, state body representatives, professional and specialists in the field, experts and actively elaborate the bill, eliminate ambiguous incomplete parts, mistakes and final review.

Attached is:

1. Comments on the draft law of Georgia on “Domestic Resident Animals” – Annex N1 – 87 pages.

Best regards,

Teimuraze Tsikoridze

Chairman of the association

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. Tsikoridze", with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.