

FOUR PAWS THE PET DECEPTION CAMPAIGN

for the
responsible selling and buying of
animals online



FOUR PAWS

- International Animal Welfare Organisation, founded 1988 in Austria. Offices in 12 countries worldwide, including Europe, USA, South Africa, Australia and Asia
- More than 500.000 donors and a worldwide audience
- Main work areas for projects and campaigns: Companion Animals, Farm Animals, Wild Animals
- Working with multi national and national businesses to develop solutions to animal welfare issues
- Cooperating with lawmakers and enforcement authorities by offering information and advice



About the “Pet Deception” Campaign

- The Pet Deception Campaign tackles the problem of poorly regulated trading of pets on classified ad sites
- Classified ad sites = online marketplaces, where any private or commercial seller can offer goods for sale, e.g. leboncoin.fr, eBay Kleinanzeigen.de, gumtree.org.uk
- Start of the campaign: June 2016, covering 10 Countries; 43 Classified Ad Sites researched; numerous issues identified, measures developed to address issues along with a comparison tool, over 165,000 petition signatures calling on global sites to introduce our measures (www.petdeception.org)

 PET DECEPTION DETECTOR	
SELECT COUNTRY	
	AUSTRALIA >
	SOUTH-AFRICA >
	UNITED-KINGDOM >
ALL COUNTRIES	
	ÖSTERREICH >
	BELGIQUE >
	БЪЛГАРИЯ >
	DEUTSCHLAND >
	NEDERLAND >
	ROMÂNIA >
	SCHWEIZ >
	SUISSE >



The way we buy pets has changed

- Public influenced by celebrity/media/life style trends coupled with the overwhelming 'cute' factor can lead to impulse purchasing, creating an artificial demand for certain breeds/species online
- The public now want “different” and “unusual” animals, this along with ease of access via the internet has led to the growth in the popularity of exotic pets
- Generally there is little knowledge of the responsibilities involved, what the special needs of the animal are (particularly for exotics) and that animals require to be cared for their entire life, for dogs and cats this means up to 15 years
- **Animals are now being seen as easy to acquire, easy to keep and easy to dispose of (throw away society!)**



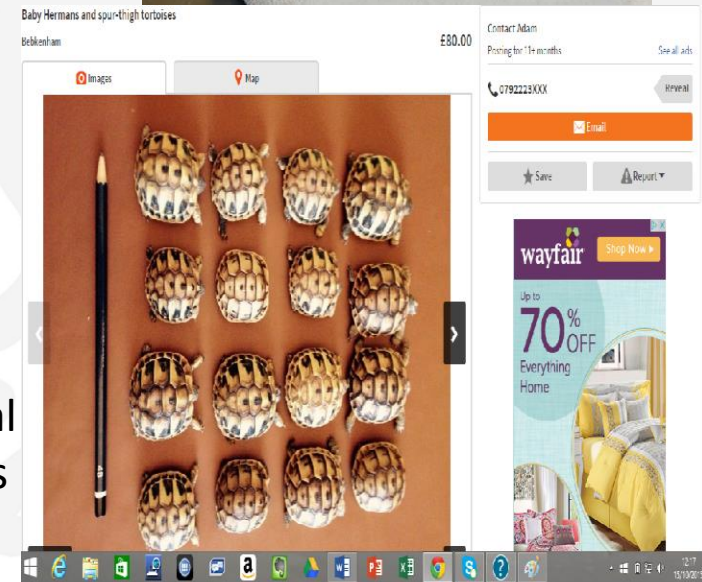
What are the issues with the online pet trade?

- **Anonymity** on classified ad sites makes them the most important selling channels for the organized illegal pet trade → an unregulated multi-million-Euro business! (puppy in PL €50 - sold in DE for €1000)
- **Volume:** some classified ad sites have as many as 200,000 pet adverts featured at any one time.



Issues include:

- Illegally imported animals, also from non-rabies free countries, invasive alien species, wild caught animals
- Sick, dying animals; too young; defective breeds; postal deliveries; exotic pets traded without required licenses



What are the issues with the online pet trade?

- Impulse purchasing of animals, high level of abandonment, overcrowded shelters -> lack of information on their needs
- Sellers of sick animals and illegal animals can “disappear” afterwards – ad not available anymore
- Many classified ad sites are currently doing very little to prevent deceptive practices, or protect animal welfare, even though some of their sellers were sentenced to prison for pet sale related fraud!



FOUR PAWS SOLUTION

Measures for Regulation



FOUR PAWS MEASURES

(selection; find all at www.petdeception.org/en/measures-information)

Seller verification: Identity must be verified by simple yet solid solution, and only one seller account per person is allowed.

Mandatory information: The seller must provide mandatory information on an animal in the advert in a set format, for example the age, gender, vaccinations, microchip number, licences and husbandry requirements

Maximum number of adverts for private sellers: there must be a maximum number of animal ads for private sellers

Pre-sales information: The site must provide high-quality pre-sale information/advice on responsibly buying, owning and selling a pet

FOUR PAWS Measures

What could be done at EU level?

- A need for clear legislative rules for all classified ad sites (esp. identity verification and only one seller account for animal sales), otherwise these companies will not change their business model
- The Animal Health law offers a real opportunity in terms of requiring all breeders and sellers establishments to be registered
- FOUR PAWS would like to see all the establishments registered on a publically accessible database managed by a competent authority who is responsible at national level for handling complaints regarding breeders and sellers



What could be done at EU level?

- EC single digital market strategy: use the proposal for a Directive on new contractual rules for online trade of goods to reinforce seller ID and verification
- FOUR PAWS would like to see all sellers displaying a registration number (this could tie in with the Animal Health Law) when selling animals online, e.g. in France this has been introduced in 2016
- We need the support of MEPs to lobby for legislation and regulation of the online trade, in particular verifying sellers ID and having in place consumer protection for anyone who buys an animal online
- Since 2010 the CARO project has urged the EU Commission to establish I&R at the EU level. The request has been also endorsed by the EU Parliament. The CARO I&R EU working group has established a full concept for an effective I&R at the EU level. Please refer to Caro website for information also CARO mag for special focus on Dog and Cat Trade.



Questions?



Thank you!