



'Serbian Animals Voice'

E mail: ~~XXX XXXXX.co.uk~~

Dear members of the Republic of Serbia government;

17/7/2013.

I write to you as the founder of NGO 'Serbian Animals Voice'.

I wish to express our deep concerns regarding the information we have that the Serbian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management has adopted legislation No. 323-02-5571/2013-05; effective from 10/07/2013 within the area of Zabrezje in Obrenovac, and also in the hunting ground known as "Posavina"; due, we are told, that the area is now infected with the disease Rabies.

Our understanding is that an area of at least 10 km has been declared to be in danger due to rabies.

We also understand that according to the decision of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, all unmarked and unvaccinated stray dogs and cats will be killed. In addition there will now be the allowed increase in the hunting of foxes and other wild animals which reside in this area.

If this is the situation, I would like to inform that given our understanding of existing Serbian legislation is that in agreement with Article 104. of the Serbian Veterinary Law, from the date of 2.11.2005, every hunting area must have (possess) a quarantine-object-building for the quarantining of all dead bodies of any wild animals after they have been hunted and killed by any hunter working on the policy of killing 'Rabies infected animals', although this would not be proven whilst the animal is alive.

All dead and allegedly 'rabies' infected animal bodies should be held within this quarantine-object-building until a full official, veterinary and laboratory analysis of the dead animals is undertaken. **Hunters are not permitted to simply shoot and kill any animal and then take the body away from the area – the animal body must be taken to, and held within the quarantine facility until detailed analysis is undertaken by the authorities to confirm (or not) that rabies is present in the dead animal(s).** If hunters simply shoot any animal and take the body away with them, they are being unlawful with regard legislation on rabies disease controls.

If there is an outbreak of the disease rabies in any area, then it is the responsibility of the Ministry to inform the OIE, the World Organisation for Animal Health, who have their headquarters in Paris, France. The OIE have a link to animal diseases which is constantly updated to reflect world animal disease outbreaks, including rabies. Here is the link:

http://www.oie.int/wahis_2/public/wahid.php/Diseaseinformation/WI

As you will be able to see, the OIE currently have NO record by the Serbian authorities of any rabies outbreaks, or confirmation of the disease in the region of Zabrezje in Obrenovac, and also in the hunting ground known as "Posavina". This is rather strange and gives one the impression that as the disease has not been recorded with the OIE, it has simply been 'invented' by the authorities as a way of allowing uncontrolled hunting of all animal species within this area; in addition to a 'cheap and easy' way of killing and disposing of stray animals, which is in direct opposition to existing Serbian legislation. We know that this is not the first time that this policy has been used for stray animal numbers reduction.

If hunters are simply permitted to walk away with their 'kills' and do not take the animal bodies to the designated quarantine-object-building until a full veterinary and laboratory analysis of all the dead animals is undertaken, then the authorities are also being non-compliant with the law by allowing this to happen.



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As a result of the above, we immediately call on the Serbian government / Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management as well as the regional authority, to act and either provide all the information relating to this 'rabies outbreak' to the OIE in Paris, or to cease calling the area 'infected' and allow the animals and wildlife to continue as normal- ie 'no killing' in the region.

This disease of rabies should certainly not simply be 'invented' in the region by the authorities simply as an excuse for the mass killing of stray animals and wildlife (foxes etc); nor should it be used as a simple excuse to allow hunters to simply be allowed to go out and kill everything they come across.

If as you declare, there IS rabies in the region, then we call on you to immediately:

- Immediately make the OIE fully aware of the situation for inclusion onto their report website page
- Ensure that ALL allegedly 'rabies' infected animal bodies are taken to, and held within a quarantine-object-building which is fully approved until a full veterinary and laboratory analysis of the dead animals can be undertaken.
- We call on you to provide full details of this quarantine building to the OIE as they will then be in the situation if rabies does or does not actually exist in the region of Zabrezje in Obrenovac, and also in the hunting ground known as "Posavina".
- Provide full details of the rabies infection in the area to members of the public through official channels.

The slaughtering of animals should not be undertaken by hunters until you have officially had confirmation of the rabies disease in the area which can only be substantiated by full veterinary and laboratory analysis of the dead animals held within the approved quarantine station.

Other OIE Rabies links:

<http://www.oie.int/animal-health-in-the-world/self-declared-disease-status/>

<http://www.oie.int/animal-health-in-the-world/rabies-portal/>

<http://www.oie.int/animal-health-in-the-world/rabies-portal/about-rabies/>

In addition, we are fully aware that from 2/1/2010 the EU taxpayer has provided funding to the Serbian Republic to the amount of around 200 million Euros for the eradication of rabies throughout Serbia using small aircraft and helicopters. We understand that a pig plague vaccination was also included in this.

So after 3 years and over 200 million Euros being provided to Serbia by the EU, we would be grateful if you could provide details of the main documented proof that this money IS being spent on this process, and not being diverted elsewhere.

We understand that a request has been made by Serbian animal welfare organisation 'EPAR' for all the evidence; and we trust that this will be provided by you to them within the next few days.

Would you please provide any responses to this letter of request to us either at the e mail address provided at the top of the page (xxx xxx), or via Dr. Medicine Slavica Mazak Bešlić at EPAR – (xxx xxx).



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You are declaring that the region of Zabrezje in Obrenovac, and the hunting ground known as "Posavina" is contaminated with rabies infected animals. This is a serious declaration to make. Now we are asking for proof and also why you have not informed the OIE if such a disease outbreak has happened.

I will be informing both the OIE and the EU (MEP's) of this situation and EU spending (200E million) over the next few days unless Dr. Medicine Slavica Mazak Bešlić hears from you by 19/7/13.

Thank you for your time and attention

*Yours – Mark Johnson
Founder SAV
Kent, England, UK.*