



Ending the Dog Meat Trade in Indonesia's New Capital Region

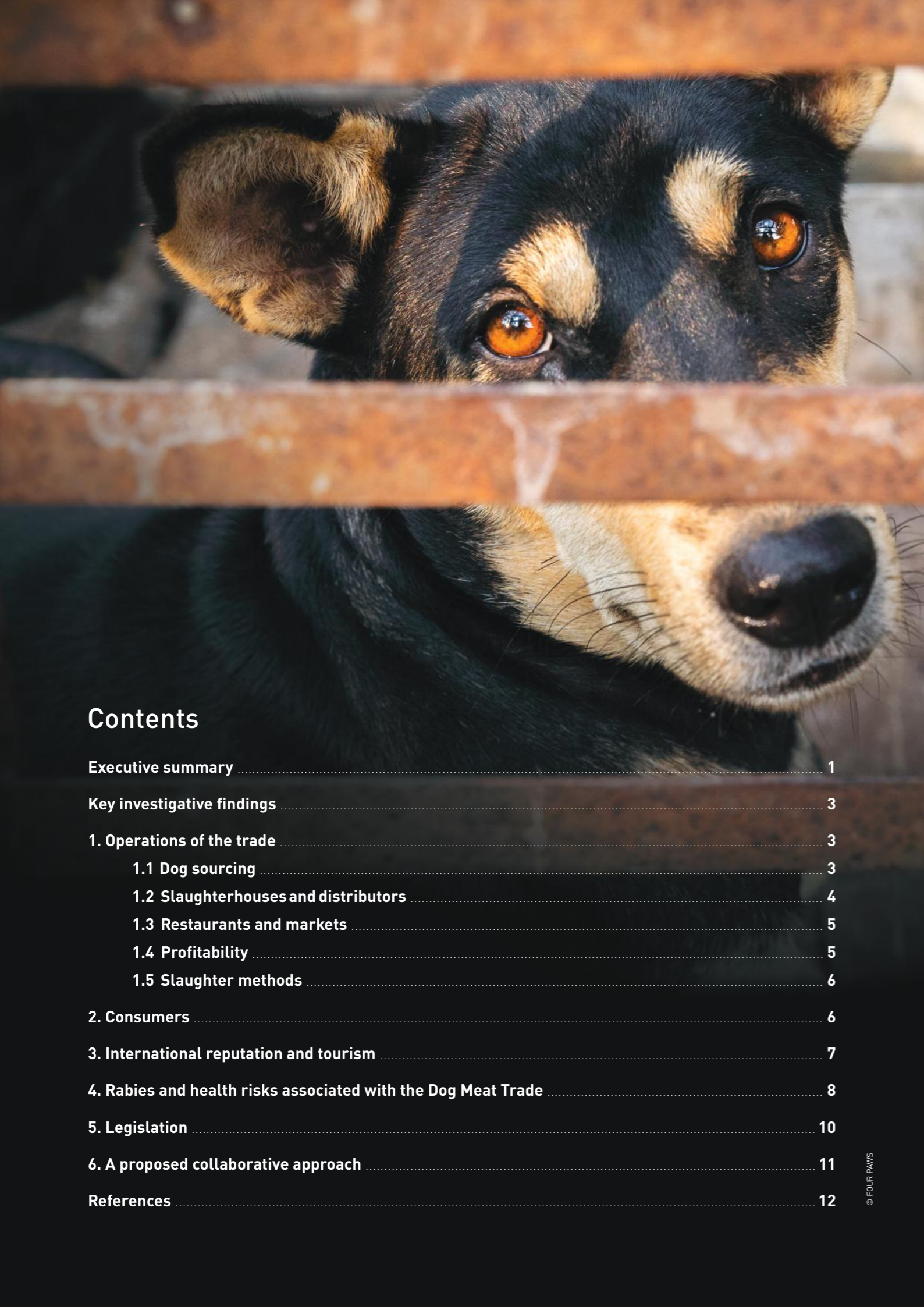
An Investigative Report into the Brutal Trade of Dogs
for Meat in Balikpapan, Indonesia 2021

Investigation supported by

October 2021

Animal Welfare.
Worldwide.





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Executive summary

About Dog Meat Free Indonesia

Jakarta Animal Aid Network (JAAN), Animal Friends Jogja, FOUR PAWS, Humane Society International and Animals Asia created the Dog Meat-Free Indonesia (DMFI) coalition in 2017 based on a shared commitment to working collaboratively to tackle the dog and cat meat trades in Indonesia through public awareness campaigning, political lobbying and engagement, and on-the-ground practical support as needed. There is an

ever-growing opposition to the dog meat trade in Indonesia and globally, and DMFI is committed to raising the profile of this issue and to ensure the strengthening and enforcement of laws that will end a trade that causes unimaginable suffering to millions of dogs each year, and poses a grave risk to human health and safety.

About Yayasan Pro Natura

The Pro Natura Foundation, based in East Kalimantan was established in March 2013, spurred by the need to provide support for the various animal and education programmes at the Sun Bear Nature Education Center, Kawasan Wisata Pendidikan Lingkungan Hidup (KWPLH). The KWPLH facility is the only environmental education facility in Kalimantan. To address the

suffering of stray cats and dogs, Pro Natura also operates a stray animal care program, supported by FOUR PAWS, to provide spay/neuter surgery, rabies vaccination, veterinary training, in an effort to humanely manage the dog and cat population and improve the health of the area's companion animals.

About Balikpapan Cat Rescue Foundation

Balikpapan Cat Rescue Foundation (BRCF) started as a small group of animal lovers who united in 2017 to care for and rescue abandoned cats in Balikpapan, East Borneo. The group's main focus is to rescue animals from emergency situations and provide medical care, and also provide shelter for abandoned cats. The group also organizes spay/neuter activities to humanely address stray animal overpopulation. Aside from providing medical care, the group also regularly feeds

stray animals especially during the economic crisis caused by COVID-19. Given their extensive experience in the area, BCRF is concerned about the region's dog meat trade, and was a key contributor to the investigation. After witnessing the cruelty firsthand involved in the dog meat trade, BCRF recently began rescuing dogs, and is active in educating the public about animal welfare through local events and social media.

About FOUR PAWS

FOUR PAWS is the global animal welfare organisation for animals under direct human influence, which reveals suffering, rescues animals in need and protects them. Founded in 1988 in Vienna by Heli Dungler and friends, the organisation advocates for a world where humans treat animals with respect, empathy and understanding. The sustainable campaigns and projects of FOUR PAWS focus on companion animals including stray dogs and cats, farm animals and wild animals –

such as bears, big cats and orangutans – kept in inappropriate conditions as well as in disaster and conflict zones. With offices in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Kosovo, the Netherlands, Switzerland, South Africa, Thailand, Ukraine, the UK, the USA and Vietnam as well as sanctuaries for rescued animals in eleven countries, FOUR PAWS provides rapid help and long-term solutions.

Between December 2020 - March 2021, an in-depth investigation into the dog meat trade in Balikpapan, Indonesia was conducted, focusing on areas where dogs are sourced, slaughtered, and sold. The investigation was the first of its kind in this area, revealing a robust, secretive trade of both live dogs and raw dog meat. With more than 15 restaurants (Lapos) openly selling dog meat in the city, dog meat is commonly sold under the names B1, RW, and Tarki. While Balikpapan is home to up to 850,000 citizens, most of whom are not even aware of the trade and of its scale, it is estimated that between 200 and 300 dogs a month are being served at restaurants in the city of Balikpapan alone. Dog meat was also widely available on online sales platforms including Grab and GoFood. The investigation indicates that currently 2,000-3,000 dogs fall victim to the trade every year, with pre-COVID numbers reaching as high as 5,000 per year.

Most restaurants ordered raw dog meat from three major suppliers/distributors in the region, which killed dogs on-site. Slaughter methods were brutal, largely involving beating and bludgeoning to death, performed in full view of other dogs. Slaughtering practices failed to adhere to any accepted national or international standards of even basic animal welfare principles.

Dogs involved in the trade were largely stolen pets, strays, or bred specifically for slaughter. All were of unknown disease and vaccination status, some of which demonstrated signs of illness at the time of slaughter. A clear network was identified connecting traders with slaughterhouses and restaurants.

The unregulated trade in dogs for meat in this area is particularly concerning given that rabies remains endemic throughout Kalimantan, despite ongoing rabies vaccination campaigns conducted by the government veterinary department (Dinas Peternakan)¹. Kalimantan Timur is striving to become rabies free by 2028², which can only be achieved if the illegal dog meat trade is stopped as it is the main factor driving the spread of rabies through dog trafficking in the province. Evidence and experience within Indonesia has demonstrated that it only takes one dog to start a rabies outbreak, and in 2019, the province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) lost its rabies-free status, with rabies now endemic in all but 8 of the Indonesia's 34 provinces. It is no coincidence that the provinces and regencies in Indonesia with the greatest demand for dog meat are also those with the highest prevalence of rabies, given that there is a proven link between the dog meat trade and rabies transmission.

¹ <https://peternakan.kaltimprov.go.id>

² <https://www.gerbangkaltim.com/2019/09/29/menjuju-kaltim-bebas-rabies-2028-karantina-pertanian-balikpapan-gelar-vaksin-rabies-gratis/>

According to nationwide investigations conducted by the Dog Meat Free Indonesia Coalition (DMFI), and supported by a DMFI-commissioned opinion poll in December 2020, just 5% of Indonesia's population ever consumes dog meat, but the trade continues to jeopardize the health and safety of the entire nation³. The situation in Balikpapan is of particular concern given East Kalimantan Province's future position on the international stage as being home to Indonesia's new capital city. According to DMFI's poll, 80% of people in Kalimantan believed that all dogs deserve care and protection, and 76% believe that dogs should not be eaten like other livestock³; and nationwide, 93% of the population are in support of a dog meat ban.

The Dog Meat Free Indonesia Coalition and local charities Yayasan Pro Natura and the Balikpapan Cat Rescue Foundation are committed to working in collaboration with the Indonesian government and local stakeholders to tackle the dog meat trade in Balikpapan on grounds of its illegality, extreme animal cruelty and the risks it poses to the public health and safety. Through collaboration, we can successfully eliminate rabies, protect animal welfare, and promote Balikpapan for taking a progressive approach by eliminating the dog meat trade, in line with the ever-growing number of regencies and cities in Indonesia, and countries throughout the region.

A young girl in Balikpapan with her adopted dog



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³ Dog Meat Free Indonesia (2021)

Key investigative findings

Captured dogs being transported by motorbike



© Dog Meat Free Indonesia (DMFI)

1. Operations of the trade

1.1 Dog sourcing

The dog meat trade in Balikpapan is largely supplied by dogs that are either pets or strays, stolen by traders. Most dogs are imported from surrounding cities and districts. Some dogs are also bred locally with the specific intention of slaughtering them for meat, and some restaurants reported on-site breeding and keeping of dogs for slaughter and sale.

Thieves looking to source dogs for the trade will commonly prey upon healthy-looking dogs as they can command higher prices. For this reason, most of the dogs that supply the dog meat trade in this area are stolen pets. At times of high demand, traders report purchasing even very young puppies for slaughter. Stolen dogs are usually captured outside of town, in rural areas within 50 km of Balikpapan. Pet owners are often devastated by the theft of their beloved pets and live in constant fear that their animals could be stolen.

The collection and transport process is brutal, with dogs often beaten over the head into submission to facilitate capture and handling. The poisoning of dogs with potassium cyanide ('potas') and strychnine is common, while others are shot using arrows and other weapons. Dogs often suffer from broken bones, wounds, and other injuries. Once captured, dogs are usually transported on motorbikes, stuffed in a sack, their

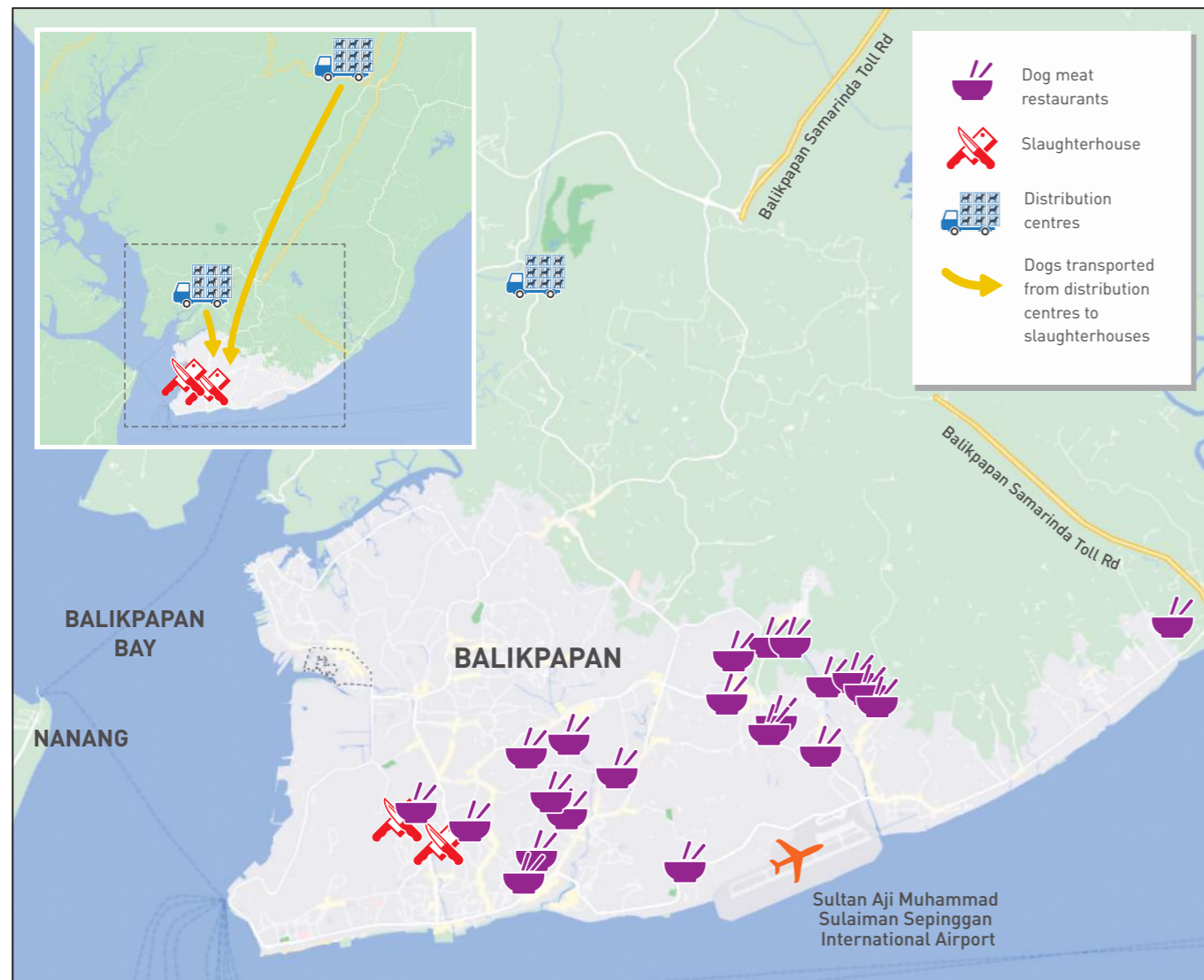
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mouths bound tightly with rope until they are delivered to slaughterhouses, which usually occurs during the night or at dawn to avoid detection.

A captured dog tied up in a bag awaiting slaughter



© Dog Meat Free Indonesia (DMFI)



1.2 Slaughterhouses and distributors

There are two primary distributors supplying dog meat for local restaurants, and two dog slaughterhouses in Balikpapan. Depending on the customer's order, distributors will sell dogs already slaughtered or still alive. If sold alive, dogs are usually extremely ill, debilitated, and injured by the time of sale due to the extreme capture and transportation conditions.

Butchering of a dog carcass



The largest dog meat distributor in the city is located in North Balikpapan, on the road to Samarinda, around 40 km from the city of Balikpapan (Jln. Soekarno-Hatta KM 40), home to a large Toraja community. This is a very rural area, off the beaten path from the large main road. Dogs are kept there for breeding and can also be slaughtered upon request. The distributor delivers meat or live dogs that are usually extremely ill, dehydrated, and near death to Lapos in the city and south of the city of Balikpapan.

The second distributor is located at KM 5 in Balikpapan. This distributor also slaughters dogs and supplies dog meat to the eastern and western areas of Balikpapan. They order and, if requested, kill 2-4 dogs per day, as well as sell about 5 kg of cooked meat daily.

The third distributor is located in town and also operates as a slaughterhouse. Here, animals are killed, butchered, and the raw meat is sold. There is an additional facility similar to this in town.

1.3 Restaurants and markets

During the investigation, a total of 15 restaurants selling dog meat were visited in Balikpapan. These are restaurants that had clearly visible signage, advertising dog meat (RW). However, investigators suspect that there are additional restaurants in Balikpapan that might not be so clearly visible, and those in surrounding areas that are not included in this list; so the probable total number of restaurants within the city likely exceeds 15.

On average, restaurants sell approximately 5 kg of dog meat per day, depending on the season. Most source raw meat or carcasses from a supplier. Only a few restaurants reported killing dogs on-site. Most reported COVID-related decreases in the demand for dog meat, as a result of restaurants being closed and people staying home. However, there have been reports of an increase in online orders for dog meat via home delivery apps like Grab and GoFood. Restaurants also routinely sell other types of meat in addition to dog meat such as pork. Dog meat is often sold as a means to provide supplemental income.

In addition to restaurants, dog meat is also openly sold at the following markets: Pandansari Market (Balikpapan) and Segiri Market (Samarinda).

Menu in a dog meat restaurant



Dog meat on a grill



Sign advertising dog meat at a local restaurant



1.4 Profitability

With dog meat costing more than other protein sources including chicken or fish, the trade is a lucrative business for dog catchers who are subject to little overhead costs. A single portion of dog meat consisting of 250-300g sells at a restaurant for approximately 25,000 IDR-38,000 IDR (US\$1.78-\$2.70). Other prices include:

- Raw dog meat per kg purchased from a distributor: 30,000-50,000 IDR
- Live dog purchased from a distributor: 350,000-800,000 IDR depending on size
- Raw dog meat per kg purchased from restaurant: 40,000-80,000 IDR
- Live dog purchased at a restaurant: 500,000-1,000,000 IDR depending on size

A dog meat restaurant that purchases 5 kg of dog meat a day and resells it in cooked portions of 250-300 grams at 25,000-38,000 IDR per dish earns on average a net profit of 250,000-500,000 IDR per day, or 1,750,000-3,500,000 IDR per week, and up to 7,500,000-14,000,000 IDR per month.

1.5 Slaughter methods

At distribution centers and slaughterhouses, dogs are kept tied up in sacks, awaiting slaughter. Their muzzles are often bound tightly with rope which restrict the dogs from eating, drinking, and they struggle to pant and breathe. Dogs are often kept in these inhumane and painful conditions for hours to days.

The bludgeoning of a captured dog tied up in a bag



© Dog Meat Free Indonesia (DMFI)

Dogs are brutally killed in full view of other dogs, in dirty, unhygienic facilities. Methods of slaughter vary, but generally consist of putting dogs in a sack and blindly bludgeoning the dog with a block, or shooting them in the head. These methods cause immense pain and suffering and are not in accordance with prevailing national or international standards on animal slaughter, let alone companion animal euthanasia. The animal suffering is prolonged and severe: it can often take up to 10 minutes for dogs to die following beating. After slaughter, carcasses are put over an open fire to burn the fur, and then butchered.

2. Consumers

The vast majority of people in Balikpapan do not consume dog meat. Dog meat is consumed by only a minority of people, the ethnic backgrounds of which are mostly Batak, Manado, Toraja and Chinese, who are mainly Christians.

During the investigations, many consumers were interviewed to determine their motivations for consumption. Some indicated that they consume dog meat believing it to have medicinal properties, such as for enhancing stamina. Dog meat consumption was also frequently accompanied by drinking alcohol.

A dog after being bludgeoned to death



© FOUR PAWS

Dogs are brutally killed in full view of other dogs, in dirty, unhygienic facilities.

A dog being blowtorched to remove the fur



© FOUR PAWS

Some people reported consuming dog meat daily, but more frequently it was eaten on special occasions (celebrations, weddings) or on holidays, including Christmas. According to an interview with a dog meat trader, following last Christmas, there were several lapsos that ran out of stock of dog meat due to high demand, and started selling the meat of quite small and young dogs.

Most dog meat consumers are unaware of the unhygienic nature of the trade and the risk of disease transmission, given the unregulated nature of the trade.

3. International reputation and tourism

Activists denouncing the dog meat trade



© Dog Meat Free Indonesia (DMFI)

The global public and political communities are becoming increasingly intolerant to the dog meat trade, as vocal opposition is increasing within the region and around the world. Dogs are seen as companions and protectors, not as food. Governments across Asia are taking steps to tackle this trade.

Research into tourism and animal welfare highlights how important it is for international travellers to not be exposed to animal cruelty:

- 90% of respondents said it was important that their holiday company takes animal welfare seriously⁴
- 83% of respondents felt that tour operators should avoid activities that cause suffering for wild animals⁵
- 54% agree they would complain to their holiday company if they felt an animal was being abused⁶
- 52% agree they would not visit a country again after such experience⁵

A negative reputation pertaining to animal welfare issues can have an impact on tourism, as the statistics above suggest. This has already been recognised by authorities throughout Southeast Asia. For example, a statement issued by the office of Hanoi's Vice Mayor Nguyen Van Suu in 2018 in Vietnam explains, "Slaughtering and eating dog and cat meat has created objections among tourists and international visitors living

in Hanoi, affecting the image of a civilized capital". In June of 2020, the Provincial Livestock Department in Siem Reap, Cambodia passed a landmark ban on the dog meat trade, recognizing the risk posed to their international reputation and tourism⁸. Finally, in April of 2020, China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, for the first time ever, explicitly stated that dogs are companion animals and not 'livestock'⁹.

Passenger plane flying over Balikpapan



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In the coming years, Balikpapan has the potential to develop into an international tourist hub as it becomes Indonesia's new capital neighbour city. Serving as a port city with its own international airport, it is also a departure point for tourists interested in wildlife and jungle exploration. There has never been a better time for Balikpapan to take action against this trade.

⁴ Fankhauser, P. (2018)

⁵ Kantar Research on Behalf of World Animal Protection (2017)

⁶ ABTA (2019)

⁷ Murray, B. (2018)

⁸ BBC News (2020)

⁹ Humane Society International (2020)

4. Rabies and health risks associated with the Dog Meat Trade

Often overlooked as a contributing factor, the trade in dogs for human consumption is incompatible with rabies elimination strategies. The key objective of a successful canine rabies elimination programme is to maintain a high enough level of rabies vaccination coverage to interrupt rabies transmission within a defined dog population. Vaccinating at least 70% of dogs in an area to eliminate rabies from a free-roaming dog population is a widely acknowledged recommendation by human and animal health experts and authorities¹⁰. Attempts to maintain rabies-free statuses of cities and provinces, and to control and eliminate rabies where rabies is still present, will fail without addressing the trade in dogs for human consumption as vaccinated dogs will be removed from the population and killed.

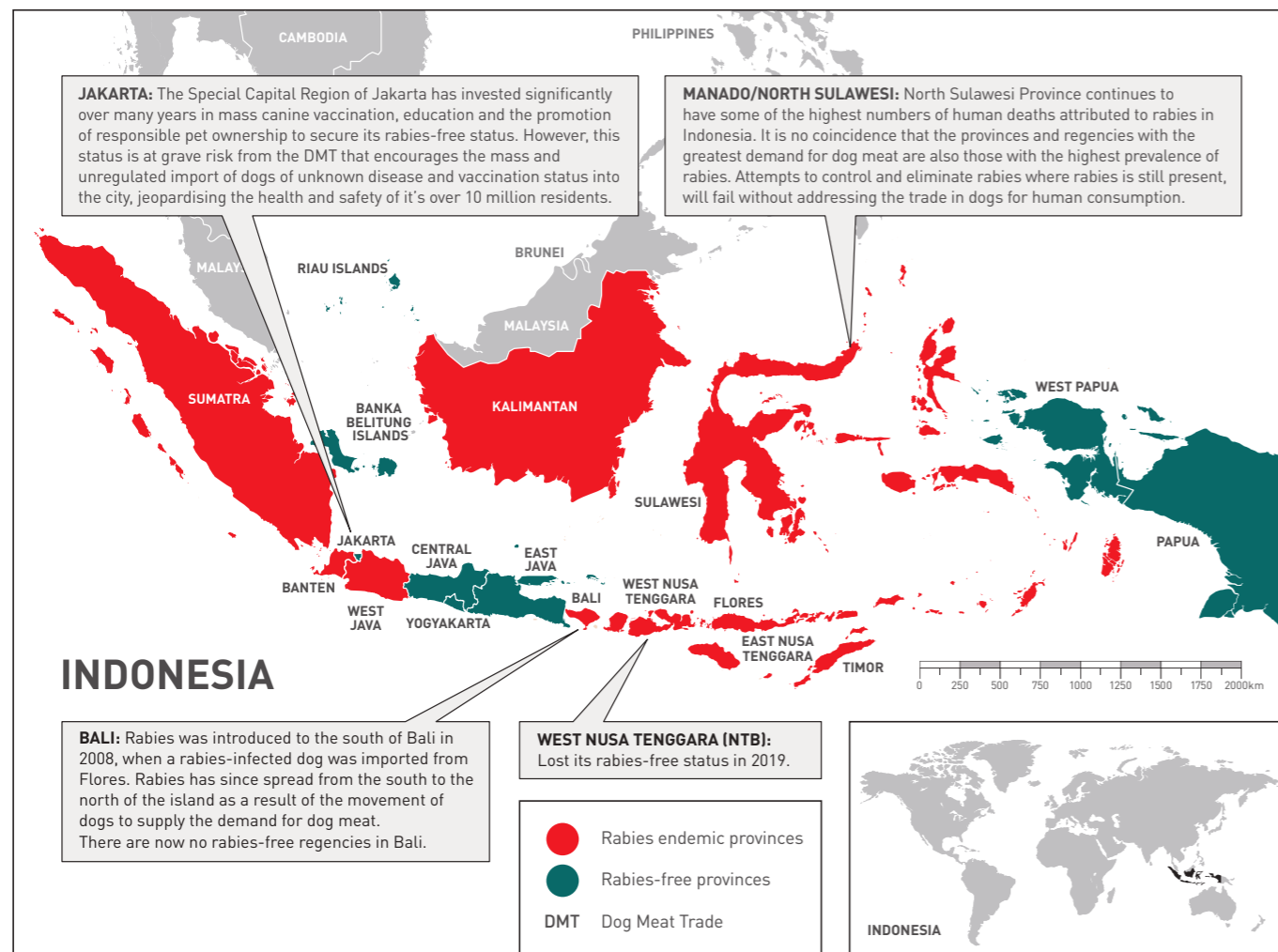
The lack of control over dog movement has been blamed for disease spread in rabies-endemic areas and disease incursion in previously rabies-free countries or regions¹¹. The demand for dog meat is encouraging the illegal movement of large numbers of animals of unknown disease status into densely-populated areas. This is impeding efforts to protect communities from the deadly rabies virus and is in contravention to rabies control and elimination recommendations by leading human and animal health experts, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as well as national disease prevention legislation.

The bodies of dead dogs and wildlife piled on top of a cage of live dogs at a market in North Sulawesi



© Dog Meat Free Indonesia (DMFI)

Relationships between dog meat trade and rabies endemicity in Indonesia



Rabies is endemic in all but eight of Indonesia's 34 provinces and there is a strong link between repeated outbreaks and the consumption of dog meat. North Sulawesi Province for instance, which has a rampant dog meat trade, continues to have some of the highest numbers of human deaths attributed to rabies in Indonesia, and all six provinces of the island of Sulawesi are rabies endemic.

During the investigation, it was noted that sick and diseased dogs were routinely slaughtered and sold for meat in Balikpapan, and slaughtered dogs potentially served as a risk to both the public and consumers. Existing published research has revealed evidence of rabies infection to humans at the following stages of the dog meat supply chain: slaughter, butchering, and preparation of raw meat. Furthermore, dog capturing and handling associated with the trade also increases the risk of dog bites and scratches, given the stressful circumstances surrounding dog capture and that many of the dogs are not used to being handled.

Kalimantan Timur (East Borneo) is striving to become rabies free by 2028¹² which can only be achieved if the illegal dog meat trade is stopped, as it is the main factor driving the spread of rabies through dog trafficking in the province. The importance of stopping the trade cannot be understated. Within the first two months of 2019, outbreaks of rabies were reported in at least four different provinces in Indonesia, with 628 human

exposure cases, and at least 12 fatalities. One of these provinces, West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), thus lost its rabies-free status that had been recognised two years previously.

The presence of rabies-infected dogs sourced and traded for human consumption has already been demonstrated by studies that have revealed a high positive incidence of rabies-infected dogs in slaughterhouses and markets from throughout the region, including Indonesia. For example, in 2007, research conducted in markets in North Sulawesi showed that between 7.8% and 10.6% of dogs being sold for human consumption were infected with rabies¹³. In 2018, DMFI tested 10 dog carcasses being sold for human consumption in Tomohon market in North Sulawesi, and one sample tested rabies-positive¹³.

In February 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States (US CDC) commented in response to these findings:

*"There are reports that dog-meat markets have a higher rate of rabies than the general dog population, as people often sell dogs to the markets when they act sick; some of these sick dogs have rabies. Furthermore, there are at least three published reports of humans acquiring rabies from activities associated with the dog meat market, emphasizing that the risk is very real."*¹⁴

¹⁰ WHO (2018)

¹¹ Fahrion, A.S., et al. (2017)

¹² Adiani & Tangkere (2007)

¹³ Sydney Morning Herald (2018)

¹⁴ Humane Society International (2020)

5. Legislation

Across Indonesia, regencies are taking steps to pass by-laws to effectively ban activities pertaining to the slaughter of non-livestock species, in the interest of public health and animal welfare.

In August of 2018, the Indonesian Central Government agreed to issue a regulation banning the trade in dog meat amid concerns of rabies and animal abuse. Across Indonesia, regencies are taking steps to pass by-laws to effectively ban activities pertaining to the slaughter of non-livestock species, in the interest of public health and animal welfare. Karanganyar and Sukoharjo regencies, and Salatiga City in Central Java have already enacted and enforced explicit bans on the dog meat trades. Such actions have been celebrated extensively in local and international media^{15,16,17}. Local police are also helping combat this trade. For instance, on 6 May 2021, the police in Kulon Progo Regency intercepted a dog meat trader illegally transporting 78 dogs for slaughter in Central Java¹⁸.

A captured dog being transported to slaughter



Indonesian animal welfare laws, criminal laws, and disease control/elimination laws clearly prohibit all aspects of the dog meat trade. These regulations can be used as the basis for drafting a local regulation in Balikpapan to tackle the illegal importation, distribution, slaughter, and trading of dogs and their meat.

- 1. Bill of The Republic of Indonesia Number 18 of 2012 Concerning Food** in which dog meat is not included in the Category of Food sources, and there are therefore no legal grounds for its production or distribution.
- 2. Bill of The Republic of Indonesia Number 18 of 2009 juncto Bill of The Republic of Indonesia Number 41 of 2014 Concerning Animal Husbandry and Animal Health** prohibits the trading and slaughtering of animals in cruel and abusive ways; and the export/import of animals and animal products that may carry other animal diseases from infected and/or suspected areas to disease-free areas.
- 3. Bill of The Republic of Indonesia Number 16 of 1992 Concerning Animal, Fish and Plant Quarantine (Article 6)** stipulates that potential rabies carriers (including dogs, cats, monkeys, skunks, wolves, raccoons and bats) must be accompanied with a health certificate; must enter/exit through a designated place of entry and place of exit; and must be notified and presented to the quarantine officer at the places of entry and exit for quarantine actions.
- 4. The Government Regulation of The Republic of Indonesia Number 82 of 2000 Concerning Animal Quarantine and the Government Regulation of The Republic of Indonesia Number 47 of 2014 Concerning Control and Prevention of Animal Disease**, stipulate that if the animals being traded are not accompanied by required permits, they should be refused entry.
- 5. The Government Regulation of The Republic of Indonesia Number 95 of 2012 Concerning Veterinary Public Health and Animal Welfare, Article 8** stipulates that, amongst other things, all animals must be provided with a health inspection before slaughter by a veterinarian at the abattoir or Veterinary paramedic under Veterinarian Supervision Authority; the suffering of animals must be limited; and that the offal and carcasses must be health checked post-slaughter.

¹⁵ Tribun Solo (2021)

¹⁶ The Jakarta Post (2019)

¹⁷ Bangkok Post (2018)

¹⁸ Tribrata News (2021)

6. A proposed collaborative approach

Local activists protesting the dog meat trade



The Dog Meat Free Indonesia Coalition, Yayasan Pro Natura, and Balikpapan Cat Rescue Foundation would like to propose a collaborative approach to work with the East Kalimantan Animal Husbandry Department and other relevant stakeholders to support Indonesia's commitment to ending the dog meat trade based on:

- **Concerns for animal welfare:** there is evidence documenting severe animal cruelty during all stages of the dog meat trade in Balikpapan and throughout Indonesia – capture, transports, sale and slaughter.
- **Concerns for public health and safety:** there is mounting evidence of the link between the dog meat trade and rabies; and growing societal unrest surrounding these trades within Indonesia from pet owners who have had their dogs stolen as well as the ever-growing national and international animal protection movement.
- **Concerns for the routine contravention of existing laws and regulations by traders and restaurant operators:** there are already laws and regulations in place in Indonesia that are being flouted on a daily basis by those profiting from the trades, relating to animal theft, disease transmission, animal cruelty and public health, safety and hygiene.
- **Mounting international concerns and condemnation:** As an ever-growing number of cities, regencies, provinces and countries around the world are taking actions to tackle these illegal trades, the global public and political communities are becoming increasingly intolerant to the dog meat trade, as vocal opposition is increasingly common within the region and around the world.

- **Existing and widely-publicised commitment to tackle dog and cat meat trades:** As pet ownership increases throughout Indonesia, more and more people are standing up against the dog meat trade. There is also an existing commitment and pledge from the central Indonesian government to take action to tackle the trade.
- **Local opposition to the dog meat trade:** More than 80% of people in Kalimantan believe that all dogs deserve care and protection, and 76% believe that dogs should not be eaten like other livestock.

Through an effective and positive city-wide campaign, together we can tackle the illegal activities associated with the dog meat trade and celebrate dogs as companions, not food.

We are committed to working in collaboration with key stakeholders including the East Kalimantan Animal Husbandry Department to tackle this issue. We propose a collaborative action plan involving public awareness activities coupled with action to close slaughterhouses and stop the trading of dogs, while providing on-the-ground support and assistance. During COVID, the investigation revealed a decrease in dog meat activity, and now would be the ideal time to stop the trade completely, before tourism resumes and additional progress is made moving the capital to East Kalimantan. Through an effective and positive city-wide campaign, together we can tackle the illegal activities associated with the dog meat trade and celebrate dogs as companions, not food.

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The Dog Meat Free Indonesia Coalition and local charities Yayasan Pro Natura and the Balikpapan Cat Rescue Foundation are committed to working in collaboration with the Indonesian government and local stakeholders to tackle the dog meat trade in Balikpapan on grounds of its illegality, extreme animal cruelty and the risks it poses to the public health and safety.



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