

E-6744/10EN

Answer given by Mr Dalli  
on behalf the Commission  
(21.9.2010)

In the last decades, the Commission has provided wide financial support to Member States for their eradication programmes of rabies in the framework of Council Decision 2009/470/EC on expenditure in the veterinary field<sup>1</sup>. Since rabies is mainly spread by wild foxes in the EU, the Commission support concerns the oral vaccination of foxes. The EU supported programmes have been widely successful and currently the disease is only present in very limited areas of the EU. The control of the stray dog populations has never been necessary to eradicate rabies in the European context, and is not included in the EU programmes.

No EU harmonised legislation is in place in relation to the protection of stray dogs. Therefore, the matter falls under the sole responsibility of the Member States. However, the Commission has actively supported the work performed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) in order to develop specific guidelines for the control of stray dog populations and to promote its implementation.

The Commission is also convinced that some unacceptable practices are due to a lack of basic education on the welfare of animals. To this effect, the Commission will organise in October 2010 the first international conference on education and animal welfare.

Furthermore, the Commission is cooperating with other organisations to the development of the "carodog" website<sup>2</sup> which will be an information system for canine population knowledge management leading to responsible dog ownership.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 155, 18.6.2009

<sup>2</sup> See [www.carodog.eu](http://www.carodog.eu) (still under development)