



## James Pirnay

### Head of Community Engagement FOUR PAWS Companion Animals Programme

With 10 years experience in the field of animal welfare and conservation, James is specialised in Companion Animal Programmes. James joined FOUR PAWS in 2016 as EU Policy Officer where he worked on campaigns aimed at reducing the illegal puppy trade and regulating the online pet trade in Europe.

In March 2017, he was appointed Head of Community Engagement as part of FOUR PAWS International Companion Animal Programme. In his current role, James is responsible for FOUR PAWS Stray Animal Care community engagement, 'Dogs for People', a stray animal assisted therapy programme and FOUR PAWS Shelter Assistance Programme.

Prior to joining FOUR PAWS, James worked as EU Policy Officer and Programme Manager for the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). In his role, he helped to find humane and sustainable solutions for communities in Europe struggling to manage stray dog and cat populations. He also led the launch of IFAW's Education programme, developing education materials and targeting international schools worldwide.

## Abstract

### Companion animals in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Technological developments such as the internet and online trading have helped to drive significant change in the way puppies and kittens are bred and sold in Europe. An international market economy has developed, such is the growth in demand for pedigree/'designer' cats and dogs. Great change in production and supply has occurred, often involving intensive breeding, cross-border transportation and internet selling. Animals have become 'products' and are traded as such, as society follows fashion fads and celebrity culture, creating an unsustainable demand. Many animals become victims of a 'throw away' society, where pets are disposed of when no longer wanted.

The trend is spreading to a more affluent SE Asia with abandoned pedigree dogs and cats now seen roaming the streets in some countries.

These developments compound the problem of stray animals, but are not treated as a contributor. FOUR PAWS campaigns internationally for legislative change in online selling and promotes public education towards responsible pet buying.