



Stephen Kaufer
President & CEO TripAdvisor
400 1st Ave
Needham,
MA 02494-2815
USA
Skaufer@tripadvisor.com

2nd January 2018

Dear Mr. Kaufer,

We are writing to you on behalf of the Dog Meat Free Indonesia (DMFI) Coalition¹ – founded by Animal Friends Jogja, Change For Animals Foundation, Humane Society International and Jakarta Animals Aid Network. The DMFI has a shared commitment towards ending the trade in and slaughtering of dogs, and sale of dog meat, based on grounds on animal welfare and public health and safety.

Since 2016, DMFI Coalition members have been conducting nationwide investigations into the dog meat trade, and additional investigations focusing on the live animal markets in North Sulawesi in December 2017, including “Tomohon Extreme Market” and “Langowan Market”.

The video evidence we have gathered during our investigations has raised grave concerns about animal welfare, including the routine bludgeoning to death of thousands of dogs and cats every week, the cruel blow-torching of live animals, and the brutal killing of dogs and cats in full view of their terrified cage-mates.

In addition to the shocking levels of animal cruelty observed, this trade poses a serious risk to public health and safety, not least by breaching national anti-rabies regulations, but also the risk of other disease transmission due to unsanitary slaughter methods.

We are shocked to discover that TripAdvisor lists “Tomohon Extreme Market” as “#7 out of 12 things to do in Tomohon²”. On behalf of the millions of supporters represented globally by our organisations, we would like to express our horror at such a listing which trivializes the very serious nature of the animal suffering and cruelty involved at these markets as though it were for entertainment.

Please view for yourselves the shocking cruelty that we have documented:
www.dropbox.com/s/q76uvd72i5petjc/DMFI-b-roll.m4v?dl=1

TripAdvisor, owned by TripAdvisor Inc., is one of the world’s largest travel sites and a company with enormous influence and capacity to do good. Extreme animal abuse should never be promoted to tourists as an attraction. Instead of promoting these markets, which

¹ www.dogmeatfreeindonesia.org

² https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g680013-Activities-Tomohon_North_Sulawesi_Sulawesi.html#ATTRACTION_SORT_WRAPPER



also routinely sell illegally caught and endangered wildlife including species of snakes and monkeys, we would like to see TripAdvisor warn tourists to avoid these locations, and instead promote areas of natural beauty and biodiversity for which Indonesia is renowned.

In addition to the shocking animal cruelty, TripAdvisor's promotion of Tomohon Extreme Market is also irresponsible because of the grave health risk posed to visitors, which could threaten visitors' health and safety.

Whilst we express our grave concerns for all animals slaughtered for, and at, markets throughout North Sulawesi, this letter will focus on the human health and animal welfare implications of the dog and cat meat trade in Tomohon Extreme Market and other markets in the province. Whereas most other animal species appear to arrive at these markets already dead, thousands of live dogs and similar numbers of cats are brought to these markets every week and brutally slaughtered.

Based on the following, we urge TripAdvisor to take urgent action:

- North Sulawesi Province continues to have some of the highest numbers of human deaths attributed to rabies in Indonesia – with a majority of those cases in Minahasa Regency, where there are a number of “traditional markets” trading in live dogs, cats and other animals.
- There is also growing evidence that the practices of dog slaughtering, butchery and consumption pose a threat to human health by increasing the potential for humans to become infected with the fatal rabies virus.
- The demand for dogs and cats at live animal markets 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 presence of rabies-positive 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 (Manado, Airmadidi and Langowan) showed that between 7.8% and 10.6% of dogs being sold for human consumption were infected with rabies.
- In addition, sick and diseased dogs are routinely slaughtered and sold for meat, as well as those who have been killed in a way that poses a grave, and potentially fatal, risk to both the public and consumers:
 - In the markets, dogs (and cats) are routinely bludgeoned on the head, with far-reaching blood splatterings, and potential spread of brain matter;



- There are increasing numbers of reports of dogs being poisoned and their carcasses being sold for consumption. Poisons routinely used by unscrupulous traders, such as strychnine, are highly toxic and experts have confirmed that humans can be poisoned by eating this contaminated meat. There are increasing numbers of media reports of people, including children, dying after consuming dog meat.
- Investigations have revealed that the theft of dogs (and cats) by traders is the main source of dogs (and cats) into markets in North Sulawesi, with an estimated 90% of all dogs being stolen and 80% being imported from other provinces, and all therefore illegal.
- Furthermore, a number of species of wildlife that are protected under Indonesian law are regularly sold at markets throughout the Province, further encouraging illegal activity that is decimating wild populations and causing immense animal suffering.

The cruelty endorsed by TripAdvisor by promoting live animal markets is of great concern. The transport, handling and slaughter of thousands of dogs (and cats) each month causes immense animal suffering, that should be condemned, not promoted as a “must see”.

The Dog Meat Free Indonesia Coalition and other organisations working in Indonesia, are committed to supporting in-country initiatives to control and eliminate rabies and to promote a more compassionate attitude towards animals, so as to safeguard human and animal health and welfare. We believe that TripAdvisor’s promotion of these extreme markets negates these efforts, and is inappropriate and dangerous.

Whilst some may defend these practices as local “custom”, we do not believe that custom should ever be allowed to excuse or normalise animal abuse. The reality is that, regardless of its origin, the live animal markets undermine national and public interest and safety, and promote the illegal sourcing and trading of animals, posing a serious risk to human health, and animal welfare. This treatment of animals is both illegal and wholly unacceptable to the global community.

Tomohon’s and Indonesia’s international reputation is being compromised by such markets. As national and international concern for animals grows, by both the public and the governments, so does condemnation for animal cruelty and exploitation.

Concerned supporters and media from both within Indonesia and from the international community routinely contact DMFI coalition members expressing concerns regarding the extreme cruelty of Tomohon Market and other markets in the Province. These calls for action are likely to continue to grow unless there is an urgent commitment and subsequent actions to tackle the issues outlined in this letter. We thereby urge you to take immediate action to address these concerns, by removing any promotion of live animal markets and issuing a statement discouraging visitor participation in activities that encourage the dog and cat meat trade, and that of protected wildlife species.



We look forward to hearing your response regarding this urgent matter and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss in further detail.

Sent on behalf of the Dog Meat Free Indonesia Coalition



Please respond to Lola Webber, Dog Meat Free Indonesia Coordinator, Lolawebber@changeforanimals.org; Karin Franken, Jakarta Animal Aid Network, jaan_adopt@yahoo.com

Copied to:

Barbara Messing

Chief Marketing Officer
TripAdvisor
400 1st Ave Needham,
MA 02494-2815
USA

Bmessing@tripadvisor.com

Governor Olly Dondokambey

Jl. 17 Agustus No.69,
Teling Atas, Wanea,
Kota Manado,
Sulawesi Utara
Republic of Indonesia
gubernur@sulutprov.go.id
ollydondokambey@yahoo.com

Mayor Jimmy F. Eman

Jalan Slanag Kelurahan Kolongan,
Tomohon,
Sulawesi Utara
Republic of Indonesia
info@tomohonkota.go.id



Mayor Vicky Lumentut

Jl. Balai Kota No.1,
Tikala Ares, Tikala,
Kota Manado,
Sulawesi Utara
Republic of Indonesia
pemerintah@manadokota.go.id

Head of Presidential Staff: Teten Masduki

Jl. Veteran III No.2, RT.2/RW.3,
Gambir, Kota Jakarta Pusat,
Daerah Khusus Ibukota
Jakarta 10110
Republic of Indonesia
webmaster@ksp.go.id
dumas@setneg.go.id

Executive Office of The President

Hageng Suryo Nugroho

Department of Analysis & Oversight of Strategic Issues on
Social, Cultural, and Ecological Affairs
Gedung Bina Graha
Jl. Veteran No. 16
Jakarta
10110 Indonesia
Republic of Jakarta
Hageng.nugroho@ksp.go.id

Arie Bororing

Dinas Pertanian dan Peternakan Sulawesi Utara
(North Sulawesi Agriculture and Livestock Service Office)
Jln. Kompleks Pertanian Kalasey
Manado,
Indonesia 95014

Jantje Sajow

Jalan Sam Ratulagi,
Tondano,
Minahasa,
Sulawesi Utara
Republic of Indonesia
info@minahasa.go.id



DOG MEAT FREE INDONESIA