

“What can reduce the number of dogs and cats killed in Japan to zero?”

1. Reasons

My cats were adopted from the animal protection organization. When I was a child, I was surprised to see the facilities used by animal shelters, so I became interested in the current situation of animal organizations. As a result, I learned that many dogs and cats are still killed in Japan. I believed this problem should be solved, and I want to help reduce the number of animals killed in Japan.

2. Research Method

To investigate this issue, I researched the causes of animals culling and possible solutions. I examined animal welfare policies in other countries, especially Germany, and compares them with Japanese policies. I also used the information from animal welfare organizations, AWGs, Tierheim, and the Ministry of the environment website.

3. Contents and Results

Although animal welfare has improved around the world, many dogs and cats are still culled every year in Japan, approximately 9,000 animals were culled in 2023. Of the animal adopted, 10% dogs and 30% cats are culled. In Australia, about 70,000 animals are culled each year, accounting for 35% of the dogs and cats taken into shelters. In the United States, approximately 15% of shelter animals are culled. Research shows that some major causes include aggressive animal behavior, unsuitable living environments for pets, unsold animals in pet shops, and limited capacity in animal shelters. To reduce the number of animals being culled in Japan, I suggest several solutions.

First, adopting a “pet tax” toward pet owners will reduce the number of pets, and promote animal protection activities. The revenue from the “pet tax” will be given to protection organizations to fund their equipment and activities, so we

will be able to support animal protection. The “pet tax” originally comes from Germany, it was called a “dog tax” . I am recycling this idea and adopting it for our use.

Second, establish larger and better-equipment animal protection facilities like Tierheim, where the number of animals culled is close to zero. Tierheim is located in Germany, one of the largest and best- equipped animal protection facilities in Europe. If similar facilities are established, they may help solve funding shortages and improve equipment and animal care services.

Third, promoting facility animals could help reduce the number of animals that are culled. Facility dogs work in hospitals, courts, and schools where they provide comfort and emotional support to people. Animal protection facilities can also promote the adoption of rescued animals. As a result, public awareness of animal welfare and facility dogs may increase. I believe this could help reduce the number of dogs and cats that are culled. In addition, cats can also provide emotional support to people. Therefore, I suggest expanding the concept of facility dogs to include cats and calling them “facility animals” .

Fourth, “pet insurance” should be made more accessible and widely used. Some animals with illnesses or disabilities are culled because their medical treatment is expensive. Pet insurance helps owners pay for veterinary care by providing financial support when their pets become sick or injured. If more people have access to pet insurance, they may be more willing to adopt and care for animals with health problems. As a result, fewer animals may be culled due to financial reasons.

Fifth, regulations for breeders and pet shops should be strengthened. In Japan, breeders are classified as “Type 1 Animal Handling Business” and are required to register with the government. However, stricter regulations and inspections could further improve animal welfare. Stronger oversight would help prevent irresponsible breeding practices and reduce the number of animals that are abandoned or culled. Therefore, I believe that strengthening regulations for breeders and pet shops is an effective way to reduce animal culling.

4. Future Challenges

There are many policies that focus on dogs, because dogs are generally more connected to society than cats. There is a large amount of animal culling around the world. Many policies have been created for dogs, but fewer policies specifically address cats. Therefore, I believe that implementing policies focused on cats would effectively reduce the number of dogs and cats that are culled. Germany is known for its “no-kill” approach to animal welfare. In Germany, animals are viewed as family members rather than possessions, they are recognized as living beings with rights. In contrast, some people in Japan still tend to view pets more as possessions than as family members. Germany has successfully reduced the number of animals culled to zero. In conclusion, Japanese people generally have a strong sense of responsibility. If attitudes toward animals continue to change, Japan may be able to achieve results similar to Germany’ s.