**How does the killing of street dogs lead to breaching the ecosystem and biodiversity in Egypt?**

**Does the killing of street dog’s leads to violation of the ecosystem and biodiversity in Egypt?**

**By: Ahmed Youssef**

The controversy in Egypt has long been about the phenomenon of the spread of dogs in various Egyptian streets. It is not almost unfortunate or district of thousands of them, regardless of the nature of this city.

For years, the Egyptian government has been pursuing an anti-street dogs, especially since some of these dogs may be infected with rabies, which forced the state to launch an initiative to eliminate rabies by 2030 and devote government and civilian efforts to combat the disease, but how do the state face this The phenomenon and how environmental and health and biodiversity are considered when dealing with the street dogs.

**Legal legislation:**

According to Egyptian [Agriculture Law](https://sheriflawyer.blogspot.com/2011/07/53-1966.html) No. 53 of 1966, article 131, The Minister of Agriculture is obliged to issue "decisions determining the actions taken on dogs, dog disease, the monitoring of the fierce animal, mice and cases where these animals may be adjusted and executed without compensation for their owners."

In 1967, the Minister of Agriculture was [issued](https://ahmedazimelgamel.blogspot.com/2019/02/35-1967.html) for the realization of the previous article 35 of 1967, where article 12 provides for the "commitment of veterinary management competent to poisoning dogs that exist in the roads and public.

Hence, the General Authority for Veterinary Services, affiliated with the Ministry of Agriculture, is responsible for poisoning streets dogs and then buries or burned them according to the law.

**Government campaigns to kill and poison street dogs:**

The local administration in the governorates in Egypt has [several campaigns](https://www.masrawy.com/news/news_regions/details/2020/3/4/1736145/%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B8-%D8%A3%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%88%D8%B7-%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D9%83%D8%AB%D9%81%D8%A9-%D9%84%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B6%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%EF%BF%BD) from one period to another, in which the elimination of stray dogs are targeted in On the coordination between the Directorate of Veterinary Medicine, Living Officers and Centers, and stray dogs are usually treated either [by killing](https://www.masrawy.com/news/news_regions/details/2021/10/24/2111199/%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%B9%D9%82%D8%B1-37-%D9%85%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B7%D9%86%D8%A7-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%83%D9%86%D8%AF%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D9%85%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%84%EF%BF%BD%25) or dumping foods that have been used in the genocide and anti-proliferation of dogs in the Egyptian streets, estimated at 20 million dogs, Depending [on the study](https://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/5212919) of a veterinary doctor at the Ministry of Agriculture.

In February last year, a group of stray dogs attacked the people of a village at Malawi Center in Minya Governorate, south of Egypt, killing 14 children, who were taken to hospital. The veterinary in Minya, that the face of stray dogs is carried out through the implementation of several campaigns, using the articles of "Strychnine" to execute dogs in villages, noting that campaigns include veterinarians.

**Strategy for sustainable development in Egypt, but not activated:**

[Dina Zulfakar](https://www.linkedin.com/authwall?trk=gf&trkInfo=AQHzlO3cNF1a7QAAAX0mMdnIoYERg3RhDh3u3514Ta2EdFDTGuavVYNZRUM44ZdpuSwIewpcCTmWZ1IkkyfQxbCQ-pfj2zTsV4fN3o5QOvtAr6DyWOrP3f-reJB3oXgUuUEeK7M=&originalReferer=https://www.google.com/&sessionRedirect=https%3A%2F%2F) an animal rights activist, explained in a special interview, that the Egyptian government had issued on 28 September 2020 strategy for sustainable development by 2030, one of its axes had to combat human and animal diseases, but since then the details of the strategy were not announced, The Government has not taken effective steps to reduce these diseases, achieve environmental balance and lack of breach, and strengthen biodiversity, according to the Dina.

Zulfakar, also stressed that the protection and promotion of biodiversity in Egypt can’t be happen by eliminating the Egyptian dogs, because it is considered one of the original species, therefore, combating stray dogs in the streets and killing them, whether by using shotguns or poison, is a crime against animal rights on one hand, and on the other hand this can destroy the environmental balance and reduces the chances of biodiversity, which Egypt announced that the government is caring about, and hosts a [UN conference](https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/316432/Egypt/Politics-/UN-conference-to-address-biodiversity-loss-as-it-k.aspx) to address biodiversity in 2018 in Sharm El Sheikh to promote biodiversity, but government practices do not confirm that, but may reveal the opposite!

**The government Use internationally forbidden poison to combat street dogs:**

The specialized [researches published](https://pubchem.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/compound/Strychnine) about the “Strychnine” poison indicates that it is very toxic and dangerous material, according to researches published at the website "Pubchem” which specialized in research of chemistry and medical preparations, and its shown that strychnine is a kind of forbidden toxins in many countries.

This research confirms that this poison is very toxic and very dangerous on water life and has a long-term effects, as it’s do not decompose in water or soil, and the deadly dose of mouth in humans is less than 5 mg / kg, and less than 7 drops sufficient to kill an adult person, because it causes violent and paralysis of respiratory palsy in a period of 15 to 60 seconds.

It is also very toxic, fatal substance if it is inhalation, swallowed or absorbed through the skin, and although it is uneven but may decompose when heating and produces very toxic vessels. It may reach water, soil and affect it, and the containers which used to store this material may explode when it’s exposed to a high temperature.

Zulfakar explained that "Strychnine" is not included on toxins of the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Agriculture, and this is a disaster, because, this poison cannot be identified, and if any person get infected with it, the result will be "unknown" because It’s unknown material for and not included in toxins category.

**The threat of ecosystem and biodiversity:**

Zulfakar also noted that, as well as the fact that this poison is [illegal](https://www.animalalliance.ca/strychnine-ban/) in many countries, and is used without a license in Egypt, It’s also threatens ecosystem and biodiversity, Such as what happened in the “Fifth settlement” area in Egypt, when the mice, various rodents and snakes, highly increased because of lack of natural enemy “Street dogs”, which detonated an imbalance of ecosystem as a result of campaigns to kill street dogs in this region.

She pointed to another influence to kill dogs on biodiversity. The presence of some common diseases between them and human, at the same time there is an impairment in Egypt, stressing that this is the pretext of officials in the killing of street dogs, but Egypt has no rabies and if it was it’s very few, which can be treated with vaccination against the disease , she says.

Zulfakar also denouncing these practices by the Egyptian government towards the environmental regime and biodiversity, while Egypt was the host of the United Nations Conference on Biodiversity in Sharm El Sheikh which held in November 2018, and was officially selected to be the host “COP27” in Sharm El Sheikh Next year 2022.

**The government is officially using Strychnine:**

The decision to establish the Joint Viral Diseases Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, which the published in Egyptian official newspaper, No. 261 on 17 November 1985, shows that on the jurisdiction of this administration with "follow-up to the elimination of dogs and cats in all governorates and the provision of necessary Strychnine poison to combat stray dogs.

The site of the government procurement portal, says there are many newly Egyptian tenders, to import Strychnine poison, which is harmful to the environment and highly damaged by inhalation, or mouth, and do not decompose in Soil easily, harmful to man and animal together as well as their affect on ecosystem.

**Lawsuit to prevent strychnine use in Egypt:**

On 19 October 2020, the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights, on behalf of "Ortim Animal Rights association”, held [a lawsuit against](https://ecesr.org/en/2020/10/19/the-egyptian-center-for-economic-and-social-rights-demands-to-refrain-from-using-strychnine-in-killing-stray-animals/) Prime Minister, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Health, and Chairman of the General Authority for Veterinary Services, to obligate them not to use Strychnine poison to kill dogs and stray animals.

The lawsuit pointed out the “Strychnine poison” is one of the 10 most dangerous toxins worldwide.

According to the Ministry of Local Development, Egypt imports nearly 100 tons per year from India. However, government agencies do not also recognize the latest scientific research and reports published by major scientific and universities about Strychnine and its impact on the animal, environment, soil, water and humans as well.

**Government: We use strychnine but with caution and medical controls:**

A source from the General Authority for Veterinary Services, He refused to publish his name because he was not authorized to talk to the media, confirm that government are combating the spread of stray dogs using strychnine, but by veterinarians specializing in dealing with affected dogs.

He also added, in a special interview, that there are alternatives to combat stray dogs instead of using Styrchnine, but at the same time he thinks that the Styrchnine poison is the only practical solution, because other solutions such as vaccination and castration, costs money and is required to have enormous human and material resources.

The veterinarian explains: "The Castration is basically a surgery, and needs a specialized teams to treat all numbers of dogs and then conduct the operation as well as anesthesia costs, veterinarians, disinfects, threads, etc., as well as dogs preservation after the surgery, and after all of these then leave them back in the street, and therefore this process is not practical at all compared to using Strechnine poison, "he said.

He stressed that the rabies has no treatment, and what is being tried to catch up with animal or human affected by rabies, and if it is not intended at a certain timing about 24 hours, there is greater vending.

The source believes that the animal rights associations that see in vaccination and castration are solutions to the spread of dogs or solution against rabies, are not practical in their vision to the issue, because this needs massive funds and human resources.

On the other hand, the source sees that the castration process may leads to reducing the number of dogs a lot or affecting the origin itself, which will destroy the ecosystem, he added: “this process must have a certain environmental study and we can’t do a random castration as they may think, because decreasing the numbers of dogs dramatically by castration surgeries may leads to troubles in the food chain”. He said.

He stressed that the medical teams which using Strychnine poison for combating dogs, do that in few situation and not randomized, because this material is very dangerous and have bad impact on the environment, so the poison should not left in the streets, but dogs are being monitored to make sure They ate the poisoned food, and the rest of poisoned food should be taken under Medical supervision on this process, he explained.

**Killing dogs and breach of environmental order:**

 Dr. Assem Abdel Moneim, Assistant Professor of the Central Limber of Agricultural Climate, shows that the execution of stray dogs and reduced its assessment will necessarily make defects on the ecosystem and the food chain.

He gives an example what happened in the Netherlands when the percentage of dogs fell sharply, so the mice increased rapidly, therefore the soil, the plants, the production of dairy and cheese in the Netherlands have declined as a result of this.

He explained that the method of treating with dogs in Egypt is essentially harmful. Many citizens are dealing with them violently, and this is not right attitude.

Dr. Assem believes that the Egyptian dog will not be extinct because it has not reached the unjust fishing phase, and what happens only is targeting some dogs in specific areas by murder or poison, not targeting the whole origin or kind, we did not reach to this phase of course, he assured.