

Humane Society International Latin America

Highlights for 2012

Humane Society International-Latin America has been operating in San Jose, Costa Rica since 2004. Its base programs include wildlife, farm animals, marine wildlife and cacao. In 2012, its efforts were aimed at structuring its programmatic issues to be more in line with HSI/HSUS core issues. As such, in late 2011 and throughout 2012 it consolidated its relationship with the Department of Animal Health (SENASA) and found important points of collaboration, which have become the basis of a lot of the work done in 2012.

Our Programs



Wildlife

HSI-Latin America continues to work on the illegal wildlife trafficking that is common in Central America. Through funding obtained in the United States State Department, HSI-Latin America developed an interactive CD to train government officials on animal identification and handling of confiscated wildlife. In 2012 we have trained 58 people in 3 countries. Additionally, it supports and creates capacity for rescue centers. In 2012, HSI-Latin America finalized a small rescue center in a border area of El Salvador created in conjunction with the Ministry of Environment. We are also developing infrastructure plans and specific management protocols for one rescue center and a temporary holding facility



Farm Animals

This year, HSI-Latin America, in conjunction with HSI's Farm Animal Department launched a cage-free egg campaign in Costa Rica, similar to our campaigns in Brazil, India and the U.S. We have been approaching the hospitality industry, universities and farmers, thus far we have:

- Established relationship with one cage free egg producer interested in promoting the consumption of cage free eggs.
- Helped two restaurants convert to a wholly cage-free policy and one add cage-free options to their menu.
- Have reached out to at least 20 restaurants and hotels in hopes to procure the inclusion of cage free eggs into their menu.
- Sparked interest of at least two supermarket chains, in which plans to promote cage free eggs are being initiated.



Companion Animals

Based on the good relationship and formal agreement HSI-Latin America has with the Department of Animal Health we have also provided input on legislation for regulating puppy mills. More recently, we have joined other NGOs in promoting legislation entitled "Ethical treatment of animal overpopulation", which is substituting legislation that is currently being discussed by our local Congress



Dogfighting

HSI-Latin America has formed a partnership with the Costa Rican government to crack down on dogfighting and cockfighting, which although illegal is quite frequent in Costa Rica. Our anti-dogfighting campaign includes public outreach; trainings for law enforcement to handle evidence and dogs confiscated in a raid which can be used against breeders and fight promoters. HSI-Latin America is also providing the government and the dog rehabilitators with equipment and supplies for the care and rehabilitation of fighting dogs.

- Over 100 people have been trained thus far in animal handling techniques and evidence retrieval.
- Success rate of rehabilitating 80% of confiscated dogs in 2012.
- Working with the government on new legislation which would make the penalties for dogfighting more severe and require jail time for those caught in the act of dogfighting.
- After the training, the government is initiating the process of being able to enter into homes (not only surrounding areas) to gather more intelligence information.
- A direct connection has been made to the importation of dogs from the United States, which makes the dog fighting rings an international issue.



Marine Wildlife

HSI-Latin America is a participant and leader on several coalitions for the protection of marine mammals and other marine life in Costa Rica and the rest of Latin America. Through public outreach campaigns and festivals, and working with delegates to international forums, we have increased the protection for whales and dolphins, sea turtles and sharks.

- Attended the International Whaling Commission's 64th meeting in Panama as part of the HSI contingent.
- Sponsored scientific participation at the IWC meeting in Panama, enabling more latin american participation in the scientific committee (first time ever Costa Rican government participated)
- Arranged (as part of coalition) whale and dolphin festivals in coastal towns in Costa Rica to raise awareness in local communities and discourage poaching.