

## Newsletter: May 2023

### Dear Friend / Supporter

We are pleased to send to you our Newsletter and hope you will enjoy reading it. You will find out about our challenges on the administrative and financial front and can also take a journey round the world by reading our Catstar update from Sri Lanka and the thanks we've received from different rescue groups we've helped.

### Chairman's Report

At the risk of 'preaching to the converted', I thought it might be good to remind ourselves and our supporters about the success of our work as an international charity, sending equipment to help groups and organisations to improve the welfare of cats and dogs. Together, we have helped thousands of humans and animals in communities all over the world to run campaigns ensuring dogs and cats are sterilised, thus reducing the number of unwanted animals in those communities and improving the health and welfare of those that already exist. In the case of Ukraine we continue to help fund other organisations that rescue animals in distress.



*Nigel being supervised by Peter*

As reported last year our small team have been keeping in touch approximately every 2 months digitally, to catch up and process grant funding for equipment applications. You will see from articles in the newsletter that the ongoing impact of Brexit and the war in Ukraine have further impacted our ability to respond to all applications. This is due to both our own resources and inflated costs, especially when exporting equipment all over the globe.

In December 2022 we therefore took the decision to pause on any new applications for the next few months to enable us to try and find more cost effective and sustainable ways to work. This temporary pause to our equipment donations work does not affect any of the ongoing projects with which we are involved, nor indeed our attendance at ICAWC in Cyprus, where we will distribute equipment as normal. We hope to commence again later in the year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those stalwart volunteers who act as trustees for SNIP International along with Juliette Jones and more recently Adelle Goodman. Your dedication to SNIPi is invaluable.

May I also make a plea to anyone who may be inspired by our work and might be able to offer their skills, no matter how small, to make contact either personally or via our website and have a chat to how they could offer to help run our small but important charity.

Enjoy our 2023 newsletter and if you are able to help support our work with a further donation, please visit our new and improved website where you will be able to donate at [snip-international.org](http://snip-international.org).

Thank you.

Nigel Mason  
Chairman

As mentioned earlier, these past few years have been quite exceptional: two long years without ICAWC, face to face board meetings or meeting our supporters because of the travel and social restrictions, plus a huge backlog due to the pandemic and Brexit.

Finally in 2022, ICAWC returned, and the SNIP International Board of Directors was able to meet up again in London at the end of the year and managed to resolve the backlog of equipment donations.

It has not been easy and, as Brexit is here to stay, the complexity will remain. The most challenging issue is double taxing: when ordering goods from a UK-based manufacturer SNIPi must pay UK VAT, and when these goods arrive in the destination country additional local VAT has now to be paid, as well as the customs charges. As the receiving organisations often cannot afford to pay these charges, SNIPi now finds the cost of exporting equipment much more expensive.

After many long and serious discussions on how to reduce costs, the Board decided to establish an administrative body outside the UK.

SNIPi Europe (SNIPiE) was founded in April 2022. It is a registered charity based in France and is managed by two SNIPi trustees: Annika Lähdeniemi, President; and Johanna Lopez, Treasurer. SNIPiE is fully financed by SNIP International, and it is entirely administrative in nature. SNIPiE orders and pays for the equipment donations as directed by SNIPi.

This inevitably requires more work for SNIPi trustees, but the financial savings make it worthwhile.

SNIPiE became fully functioning In July 2022, after opening a French bank account and a Wise account. Between August and December 2022, SNIPiE handled equipment orders worth more than £10,000, equivalent to 98% of its total spend. The remaining 2% represents banking fees and the cost of communications.

## SNIPi statistics

Over the past 12 months, SNIP International has given out 296 pieces of equipment, worth £30,353 (incl. transport and custom duties) through applications, ICAWC and Project TNR Bulgaria and Romania.

They were donated to 86 organisations in 37 countries: Albania, Argentina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cape Verde, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Honduras, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Lebanon, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania and Ukraine; three of these are new ones (Honduras, Iran and Canada).

In total, SNIP International has donated 2,127 pieces of equipment to 637 animal rescue groups in 94 countries since its founding 27 years ago.

Additionally, in 2022, SNIP International financed Project Catstar with £9,659; Kotor Kitties' TNR project with £5,570; and Network for Animals with £1,783 (towards an animal ambulance in Ukraine).



## ICAWC Sofia 2022

After having been postponed twice due to the pandemic, The International Companion Animal Welfare Conference in Sofia turned out to be an extremely successful event with everyone on a high after the long wait!

In addition to the actual content of the conference itself, ICAWC offered again a great opportunity to share and exchange experience with animal welfare people from all over the world. SNIPi held a meeting with Dogstar Foundation to get the latest update on the Catstar Project and also had a productive breakfast meeting with Dr. Jeff Young and Dr. Petra Míčková from Planned Pethood International, discussing the challenges faced by veterinary professionals and the negative consequences of the No Kill movement.

As in previous years the ICAWC equipment donations were funded by MDC Exports Ltd (MDC), Cats Protection (CP) and SNIP International (SNIPi).

Donations of TNR equipment were made to 39 delegate organisations. These originated from 20 different countries: Albania (4), Belgium (1), Bulgaria (3), Cape Verde (1), Canada (1), Croatia (1), Cyprus (1), Denmark (1), Estonia (2), Georgia (1), Germany (2), India (2), Italy (1), Iran (1), Malta (1), Montenegro (2), Poland (3), Portugal (2), Serbia (4), Spain (1), Sweden (4). Out of these groups 41% had never received donations before!



Left: The busy stand with work in progress. Right: Three different regional subgroups of Hundstallet, Sweden, with MDC's Debbie Cooper and Miranda Luck and SNIPi's Annika Lähdeniemi.



Left: Merida Animal Welfare Association, Croatia, with MDC's Debbie Cooper and Miranda Luck. Right: Friends of Vafa Shelter, Iran, with SNIPi's Ian Keith, Annika Lähdeniemi and Lisette Cartier van Dissel.



SNIP International catching up with the Dogstar Foundation and discussing the latest developments on Project Catstar. On the left Lisette Cartier van Dissel (SNIPi); in the middle Mark Green, Rick Hayman and Sam Green (Dogstar); on the right Annika Lähdeniemi (SNIPi).



We were happy to see healthy, happy, ear-tipped (=spayed/neutered) cats in the city centre of beautiful Sofia (see the two pictures on the left). There is still a big job to be done however, and the young cat on the right and his whole family were reported to one of the Bulgarian animal welfare groups situated nearby so that they are aware of them.

## Project TNR Bulgaria & Romania!

Way back in 2019, when it was announced that the next International Companion Animal Welfare Conference, ICAWC 2020, was due to be held in Bulgaria, SNIP International started planning another Project. As Romania is in such dire need of better animal welfare and Bulgaria's geographic neighbour, SNIPi decided to do a combined Project TNR Bulgaria & Romania!

SNIPi applied for, and was awarded, a 'double grant' of £4000 from Petplan Charitable Trust, which would again be match-funded by SNIPi. Unfortunately, ICAWC Sofia had to be repeatedly postponed due to the pandemic, but finally came to fruition in October 2022. The combined £8000 funds were used to donate a 'mountain' of TNR equipment to 17 Bulgarian and Romanian organisations. In addition, a separate donation was made to Ukraine via one of the Romanian groups, Red Panda, who are currently doing amazing rescue and support work with stray animals and shelters in Ukraine.



*On the left, donation to Animal Welfare Bulgaria with Veterinarian Kostadin Dimitrov Hadzhikinov, Ted Chandler and Lisette Cartier van Dissel; On the right, donation to Animal Rescue Sofia, Bulgaria with Svetlio Petrov and SNIPi's Annika Lähdeniemi and Lisette Cartier van Dissel.*



*The extra-large equipment donation to Red Panda Ukraine, Romania with President Raluca Simion and Ukrainian refugee Anya Oborina, Petplan's Ted Chandler and SNIPi's Annika Lähdeniemi. The equipment was sent on to animal welfare groups in Odessa and in Kharkiv and finally reached the latter in February 2023.*

## 2022 Catstar's first full year

Catstar is a 3-year spay and neuter programme run by the Dogstar Foundation in Negombo, Sri Lanka. It is partially financed by SNIP International. Catstar started in April 2021, but due to the combined effects of COVID-19 and of the disastrous economic and political crisis in the country, the project did not go as planned. However, despite all the difficulties, the Catstar team still managed to sterilise 1377 cats in 2021. The year 2022 was also challenging, and the Catstar team had to constantly adapt to new situations in order to keep the project going.



The cats of Negombo enjoy full meals delivered by the Blue Team of Dogstar Foundation. On the right: an ear-tipped (=sterilised) cat of Catstar.



The year started well with higher number of cats being taken to surgery, thanks to the advertising by the Catstar team during the pre-surveys when locating cat colonies. The start of a free taxi service (with the van financed by SNIP International) was also a big help for owners who could not take their cats to the clinics.

Unfortunately, however, the programme was again restricted in the second quarter of 2022; this time due to fuel shortages and 13-hour power cuts. At the beginning of April curfews were imposed to curb the countrywide protests against the prevailing economic crisis in Sri Lanka, and some vets emigrated, leaving Catstar short on operating vets. Owner walk-ins had to be reduced, and the Catstar cat taxi service had to be suspended.

The surveys also had to be suspended from mid-May onwards due to lack of fuel. By that time, 23 separate cat colonies had been identified, containing 513 cats. It was estimated that over 90% of the cats in the colonies were not sterilised.

*Most of the cats being sterilised by Catstar are owned or "semi-owned" cats, meaning that even though they are roaming free, they do have a home and/or a caretaker. The Blue Team can even pick up the cats from their caretaker and bring the cats back after the surgery. This is to remove any obstacle there could be to get the cats spayed/neutered.*



*The Catstar Cat Taxi financed by SNIP International and one of the lucky passengers, on his way to the clinic to be neutered.*

The third quarter of the year was marked by the ongoing dire economic crisis: daily power cuts, fuel shortages (public queuing outside petrol stations for days), food and cooking gas shortages causing inflation to rise and disrupting day-to-day activities of the local community. Transportation such as tuk-tuks and buses, as well as personal vehicles, were unable to run due to fuel shortages. Sadly, all this resulted in fewer cats being sterilised.

Pre-surveys recommenced at the end of September. Their main purpose was to increase awareness of the free clinics, engaging with the community to show the benefits of cat sterilisation and to find local people interested to help the Catstar team in their own neighbourhood. Posters and leaflets were also used alongside social media.

During the last quarter of 2022, there was some improvement in the social situation in Sri Lanka. Daily power cuts and fuel shortages continued, but there were new ways to better manage the challenges, i.e. a fuel quota system permitting every vehicle owner to obtain fuel. This facilitated cat owners to bring their cats for surgeries and allowed the cat taxi service to run twice a week for those who could not bring their cats.

Cat surgeries increased significantly and the Catstar team ended the year with a total of 2609 cats sterilised. Most of these cats were owned, as due to unavailability of staff, fuel and electricity, the trapping and surgery of feral cats had to be delayed. Yet, having sterilised these free roaming domestic cats (of which the large majority was female), it has greatly reduced the potential dumping of unwanted kittens, which would have increased the stray and feral cat population significantly.



As difficulties have not ended in Sri Lanka, the Catstar team are keeping an eye on the political and economic situation as well as any social unrest. Planning and keeping on going is their motto. At the end of February 2023, the Dogstar Foundation announced the total number of sterilised cats through the Catstar initiative stood at 7496. This is amazing, especially in these very challenging circumstances.

SNIP International is very proud to be part of this ambitious project!



*Top left and right: Dogstar feeds cats and dogs, often cats first.*

*Bottom left: Cats lined up at the Dogstar's premises, ready to be taken to the clinic for neutering or spaying.*

*Bottom right: This young feline lady has already experienced the full process (see the tipped ear) and strongly recommends it to all the cats in Negombo!*





## Some thanks we've received

### PlakaKats report from Crete

SNIPi was pleased to hear that PlakaKats are still regularly using traps and cages donated to them several years ago. PlakaKats has been running a TNR project for nearly nineteen years now, and their village is known for having beautiful, healthy cats. They also support a group of cats on Spinalonga Island, an old leper colony. PlakaKats have tried to dissuade staff there from taking cats to the island but remain on hand to neuter and feed cats throughout the year - which is not easy when the tourist boats stop.

One member now raises funds from the UK, whilst another oversees cat care on the island. Although new cats arrive every year, they are identified and added to the vet list. PlakaKats feel this is a good example of how things could be done elsewhere, too; and note in their report that many cats here reach old age in good health.

SNIPi are very proud of all that PlakaKats has achieved in almost two decades of dedication to cats.



*The equipment arriving in Plaka by boat.*

### Update from Roatan Animal Welfare, RAW, in Honduras

RAW have been organising veterinary clinics on the Honduran island of Roatan for the past four years. They neuter and treat dogs and cats from low income families and thereby reduce the numbers of strays ending up on the street. Around 50% of the cats need to be trapped as they aren't tame enough to be handled. SNIPi was able to send them traps and squeeze cages to support their work. The equipment was ordered through ACES, USA and RAW was able to arrange transport to Honduras themselves.

They will hold another 2 neuter clinics in 2023 and aim to neuter 200 cats during each clinic.



*Left: An anaesthetic injection being administered in a squeeze cage. Right: Two cats placed back in the traps whilst they recover from their anaesthetic.*

## Tails from Portugal: Associação Causas de Caudas



*This tomcat will feel a lot better after his visit to the vet's.*

In Portugal, TNR projects are increasingly recognised as the most effective way to control the stray cat population. Causas de Caudas' TNR project has established cooperation agreements with several municipalities, namely Gondomar, Porto and Matosinhos; enabling them to offer stray feral cat sterilisation services to colony caretakers for free. However, this has also led to an increase in the number of captures, thus requiring more equipment.

The donation of trapping equipment has helped the association to increase their work with feral and injured cats, and their report demonstrates how TNR activities were developed after SNIPi's donation.



*A female cat entering an automatic cat trap.*

From June 2022 to January 2023, a total of 544 cats were sterilised, including 226 males and 248 females. In addition, 90 cat colonies were controlled, and 30 animals were treated in the nursery.

The arrival of new materials allowed the association to perform TNR in colonies with a larger number of animals, assist feral cats requiring special treatment, perform TNR in two colonies on the same day, and safely separate automatic traps from animal feeding points.

SNIPi is very satisfied with the important work Causas de Caudas has undertaken and hope our donation will enable them to reach more colonies and animals in the future.

**Insight:** A large part of the beautiful pictures on SNIPi's website have come from Causas de Caudas, taken by their talented photographer Luis Moreira.



*Cats waiting to be released after having been spayed/neutered.*



*Left: Cats are covered with a towel while kept in traps or transportation baskets. It calms them down considerably and avoids them hurting themselves. Right: Cats can be sterilised from a very young age with the specific methods recommended for early neutering.*



## Lamu Animal Welfare Clinic, Kenya

Lamu Animal Welfare Clinic, LAWC, has been performing TNR on the stray dogs and cats of the island of Lamu for 18 years!

They successfully applied to SNIPi for additional cat TNR equipment at the end of 2020 and after lengthy delays due to Brexit, the pandemic and a turbulent journey through Kenyan customs, the donated equipment eventually reached Lamu in May 2022!

Unfortunately, as Lamu is perceived as remote, backward and at times dangerous because of the Jihadist terrorist group Al Shabaab in the region, it is difficult to recruit vets willing to work under these difficult circumstances. Despite these odds LAWC have managed to neuter an additional 495 cats and 70 dogs in the past year, which includes both stray and owned animals. This brings the cat neuter total to 11,833 which is especially noticeable in the many ear-tipped cats seen on the island.

There is still a lot of work to do and LAWC are hoping to take on a second vet to expand their TNR activities on the other islands of the Lamu archipelago.



*'The cats are patiently baited with fresh fish into specialized trapping cages then taken to our vet clinic for neutering, vaccination and given a meal before being released at the location they were caught from.'*



*Cats recovering from the anaesthetic.*

### Did you know?

In March 2023, Hannah Shaw, an American kitten rescuer better known as the “Kitten Lady” visited the Island of Lamu and the Lamu Animal Welfare Clinic. She made a video of her visit “This African island is full of cats” ([youtu.be/7Wx7tyXqo38](https://youtu.be/7Wx7tyXqo38)).

Viewing the video was very eye opening to the SNIPi team – we hope to be able to further advise and educate the LAWC on the best use of the recently donated TNR equipment. We wish them well with all the good work they are doing!

## Kotor Kitties, Montenegro report 2022

SNIPi initially donated TNR equipment to Kotor Kitties, the first TNR project in Montenegro, in 2019. The equipment has been put to good use and Kotor Kitties now has contracts with 4 local vets who neuter the cats for heavily discounted rates (€36.30 for females €24.20 for males) after which they are released back onto their home turf.

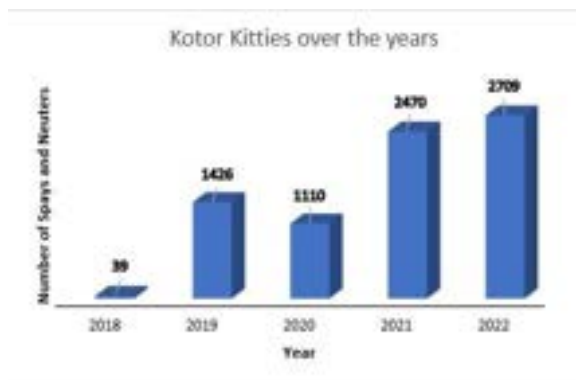
In 2022 a request was made by Kotor Kitties for funding to help with the high ongoing cost of neutering. This TNR project has been very successful and, as a high level of neutering needs to be sustained to have a long-lasting impact, SNIPi agreed to fund a one-off grant for 200 neuters = £5500 during 2022. As you can see in the graph this aim was achieved!

### Thank you from Kotor Kitties

*"SNIP-International helped our TNR project grow in 2019 and 2020, with several donations of humane traps, recovery cages, injection cages, and other equipment necessary to safely and humanely handle the "untouchable" cats in Montenegro.*

*In 2022 we were honoured that SNIP International awarded us a grant of £5,500 pounds to increase the pace and impact of our spay-neuter surgeries.*

*Thank you for not only helping Montenegro's "uncatchable" cats be humanely caught and handled for their sterilisations since 2019, but also contributing to our veterinary fees for 200 cats in 2022! We are very grateful, and people have told us there has been a noticeable decrease in abandoned kittens in our targeted areas since our project began."*



*Kotor Kitties photographs all the cats that have been neutered and they have designed this wonderful photo-mosaic of over 5000 of those neutered cats. It can be viewed in full on the internet: [kotorkitties.org/en/mosaic/](http://kotorkitties.org/en/mosaic/)*

## The best friends an animal could wish for: Associação Bons Amigos reports from Cape Verde

Lara, a veterinary surgeon, works with Associação Bons Amigos which is funded by Austria and focusses on dog and cat population management in Cape Verde. Lara recently sent a report about how the equipment donations received from SNIPi on two separate occasions were being put to good use.

In December 2021, following a successful grant application during the International Training Programme, run by Dogs Trust Worldwide, Lara received a variety of equipment. This included a Vulcan dog trap, two Eezicatch Cat Traps with mesh floors, a trap transfer restrainer trap, and two trap transfer carriers. In October 2022, during the ICAWC, she received professional safety muzzles and a cat wrap.



*Even tame cats should be transported in cages for their own security.*



Lara and her team organised a neutering campaign on Brava Island in Cape Verde, which took place from October 18th to November 3rd. During this time, they conducted various activities, including a neutering campaign in 10 different locations over 14 days. They neutered and provided parasite treatment for a total of 373 dogs and cats, as well as offering additional parasite treatment to 141 already neutered/spayed dogs and cats. The team also performed 13 other necessary surgical procedures, various treatments, and collected samples from 89 hosts for infectious disease research.

*A trap all set. It is good to label it with contact details.*

Additionally, they visited five schools to educate 166 children on basic animal care, conducted a survey on owned and stray dog populations, and provided dog and cat capture training to a local team led by Brian Faulkner. Throughout the campaign, they captured stray dogs and cats using appropriate traps. They specifically targeted areas with conflicts between dogs and livestock producers, where feral dogs were causing problems by killing livestock.



*SNIPi recommends covering the TTP before transfer.*

This marked the sixth time that Lara and her team visited the small island, which has a population of around 5,000 and no veterinarians. The donated capture equipment was essential during the campaign, enabling them to capture difficult animals and address human-dog/cat conflicts. They successfully caught 56 stray cats using cat traps and transported them using TTR/TTCs. They also captured 34 stray dogs using the provided catching equipment. The Vulcan dog trap was used at a dump frequented by strays and unsocialised dogs, where they managed to catch two dogs from this group.

The safety muzzles were utilised during dog manipulation and preparation for surgery. Interestingly, the cages proved so effective that they even caught free-roaming chickens in both the dog and cat traps!

Associação Bons Amigos aims to neuter a further 2,000 animals (including owned animals) in 2023 by organising further neutering campaigns in Brava, Fogo and São Nicolau Islands! SNIPi appreciates their great work and hopes our support will facilitate further efforts to improve animal welfare and reduce human-dog/cat conflicts in Cape Verde.



*A dog wearing a safety muzzle while being examined and treated by the veterinarian.* 13

## Kalymnos Cat Project, Greece. Run by Chats du Mercantour, France

The Kalymnos Cat Project was established in 2021 and SNIP International has donated a range of equipment to them. In the 17 months to the end of 2022, 845 cats were sterilised.

*In both pictures: Cats waiting for their boat transfer between the veterinary clinic and the island of Telendos. They seem surprisingly calm while inside the cages.*



The tiny island of Telendos was targeted, where the cats outnumber the supportive human population. A total of 84 cats were neutered here, which is remarkable considering the cats all have to be transported by boat for their surgeries. They have several other areas which they'd like to tackle for TNR this year.

## Association for the Defence of Animals and Nature, Morocco

The Association for the Defence of Animals and Nature, Morocco, also known as ADAN, attended the International Training Programme (ITP) run by Dogs Trust in 2013. In the past 9 years they have managed to capture, sterilise and care for 14,615 cats and 3,500 dogs on the streets of Rabat.

All this with the help of a small equipment donation from SNIP International in 2013 – what a great example of how much can be done with so little equipment! However, after all these years, the TNR equipment is deteriorating, so they have asked for replacement items to continue with their invaluable animal welfare work.



*The presence of the cats' regular feeder reassures them and thus facilitates considerably the trapping.*

## ICAWC 2023 – Hello again Cyprus!

The dates and the location of the next International Companion Animal Welfare Conference (ICAWC) were announced already in Sofia, Bulgaria. The ICAWC 2023 will be taking place in Nicosia, Cyprus from 3 to 5 October 2023 and SNIP International will be there again, donating and distributing TNR/CNR equipment to the animal rescue groups attending the conference.



The poster features a large, bold 'ICAWC 2023' in the top left. In the top right, there is a logo of two animal heads in a circle, with the text 'INTERNATIONAL COMPANION ANIMAL WELFARE CONFERENCE' and 'Twenty Third Annual Conference' below it. The central image shows a grand, white, classical-style building with a central archway and two side arches, set against a sunset sky. At the bottom left, the text 'SAVE THE DATE!' is written in large, white, bold letters. Below this, a paragraph of text provides details about the conference. On the bottom right, there is a circular gold seal with the text 'ICAWC 3-5 October 2023 NICOSIA - CYPRUS'.

**ICAWC 2023**

INTERNATIONAL COMPANION ANIMAL WELFARE CONFERENCE  
Twenty Third Annual Conference

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Please remember to put the 3rd – 5th October 2023 in your diary for the International Companion Animal Welfare Conference (ICAWC) in Nicosia, Cyprus. More information to follow soon, but if you know anyone who would like to be added to our mailing list, please ask them to visit [www.icawc.org.uk](http://www.icawc.org.uk) or email [icawc@dogstrust.org.uk](mailto:icawc@dogstrust.org.uk)

ICAWC  
3-5 October 2023  
NICOSIA - CYPRUS

## Our thanks

SNIP International is delighted to acknowledge support from The Ian Keith and Sylvia Keith Charitable Trust, Cats Protection, MDC Exports Ltd, DogsTrust, Petplan Charitable Trust and all the SNIP International Friends.



Very special thanks to late Amanda Green for her legacy that has helped and will continue to help thousands of animals as per her last wishes.



**SNIP International**  
Founded 1996  
Registered charity no 1064664

**Protecting stray and feral cats and dogs  
Promoting neutering programmes overseas**

**Contact details** SNIP International, 79 Warwick Avenue, Bedford, MK40 2EG, UK  
snipinternational@gmail.com

**Board of Management - Trustees**

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Melanie Davies	Treasurer email: Treasurer.SNIPi@gmail.com

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SNIP International is a member of the EU Dog & Cat Alliance.

