

Annual report GASAH

our work



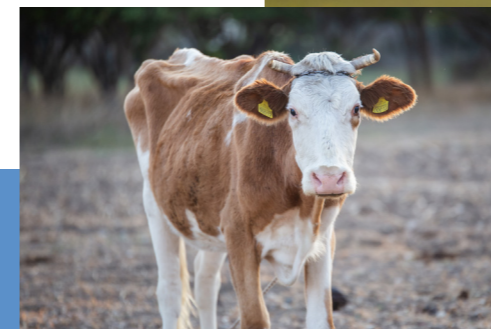
GASAH

GREEK AND SWISS ANIMAL HELP



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Foreword



My story with GASAH began eight years ago in the summer of 2015. After completing my five-year degree programme to become a secondary school teacher, I packed my bags and set off for Kos. I immersed myself in a world I had never known before. When I arrived at Stepping Stone, I was overcome by a feeling of bliss. The tranquillity and contentedness of the animals made me feel like I was in an oasis of peace. At the time, I could no longer remember how different the 'outside world' was.

Only gradually did I realise that GASAH's work is much more complex than I had assumed. Animals reproduce uncontrollably on the island, diseases spread rapidly, animal welfare laws are not observed, and the authorities often turn a deaf ear. All in all, it is an extremely challenging situation that requires a great deal of courage, resilience and perseverance. Despite many setbacks and stressful situations, GASAH carries on and works tirelessly for the animals on Kos. What is achieved there every day is simply incredible and can hardly be put into words.

After three months of volunteering with GASAH, I went home completely changed but knew that I would be returning. The extent of the suffering, the helplessness of the animals, and the lack of knowledge of many Kos inhabitants and the authorities showed me that GASAH's work would not be possible without outside support.

Through my recurring assignments and work on the committee, I have been able to witness and help shape the development of GASAH for several years now. It is indescribably wonderful to see what people can achieve when they join forces and work together for the same cause. For me personally, there is no work more meaningful than giving these innocent animals a voice and working together as a team to bring peace and love to the world.

Tabita Gentsch
volunteer & committee member

Our approach

We help animals – now and in the future!



At our animal sanctuary, we expertly nurse injured and sick animals back to health. To ensure that there are fewer animals in need of such care in the future, GASAH takes a sustainable approach. Our work focuses on projects that bring about long-term and comprehensive change for the animals.

Here is a brief outline of the areas in which GASAH is committed to sustainability:

1) Cooperation:

GASAH has made a name for itself on Kos through professionalism, continuity and years of presence. GASAH cooperates with the local authorities and vets. A sign of this success is that, in 2023, we carried out the first community-funded neutering programme with a local vet.



2) Neutering:

GASAH is actively involved in neutering campaigns to reduce the population of homeless dogs and cats in the long term. This means that fewer animals will have to suffer from hunger or rampant epidemics in the future.

3) Education:

GASAH regularly visits schools and endeavours to teach children and young people about animal welfare, animal rights, and compassion for animals. Children are our future, and will actively shape and develop the world to come.

4) Livestock farming:

GASAH records abuses in farm animal husbandry and uses the evidence it collects to draw the attention of the authorities to violations of the law.



Projects

A) Neutering project

We can look back on a successful year in which we were able to save hundreds of cats and dogs from suffering. Every single neutering has a lasting effect on the population of homeless cats and dogs, by reducing it. The fewer births, the smaller the number of animals that have to fend for themselves on the streets. The fewer homeless animals there are, the fewer animals suffer from life-threatening diseases or are affected by accidents. Neutering also helps the female animals; several births per year sap their energy, and mean they have to find more food and are more susceptible to disease. In our experience, spayed females survive many years longer than unspayed ones.

The first municipality-funded neutering project on Kos started mid-August 2022. Previously, all costs had been covered by GASA, so the municipality's financial contribution was a huge relief for us. The package for this first joint project made it possible to neuter over 300 cats and 40 dogs, and ended in spring 2023. It was a complete success.

Since then, we have again been financing neutering through donations, but the next project with the municipality is already at the planning stage. Thanks to the success of the first project, even more financial resources will be available, which means that we can give even more animals a better future.



Animal welfare requires a good deal of perseverance and resilience. It also requires well thought-out, solution-orientated approaches. GASA invests heavily in sustainable solutions to bring about change and prevent suffering in the future.

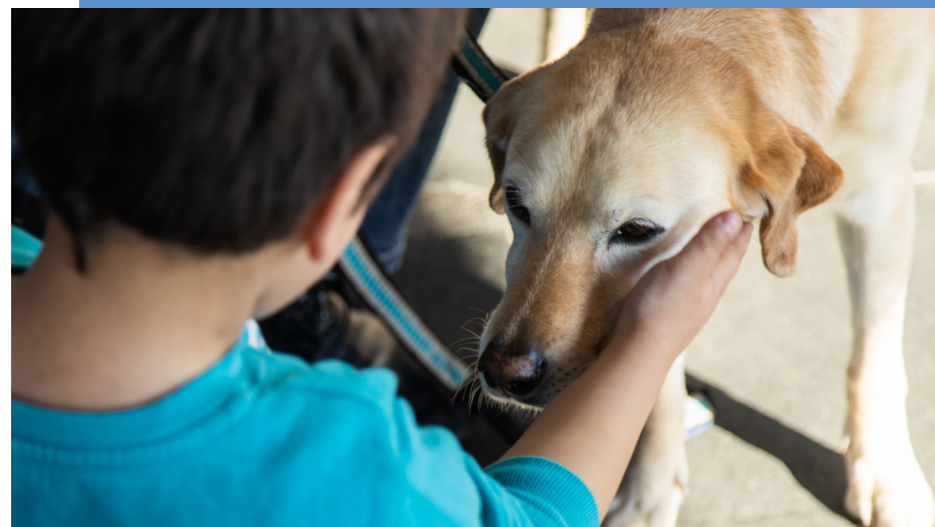
The projects listed above are explained in more detail in the next section.



B) School project

For a change for the better to take place, the topic of animal welfare and animal rights must be brought to the attention of children and young people. After all, they are the future! That is why we entered into a partnership with PFPO, a Greek umbrella organisation for animal welfare associations, in 2023. Their school programme enables us to bring our passion for animals to schools on Kos.

We have already talked to seven primary school classes about the needs and characteristics of pets and explored the topic of livestock with young people.



We also have also worked with kindergarten children on four occasions, considering various animal-related topics with all four classes. Finally, 60 of these kindergarten children visited us at our animal sanctuary, which was a real highlight for everyone!

C) Farm animal project

Documentation was at the forefront of our project for farm animals in 2023 and we invested many hours in recording abuses. The focus was on cattle that, as is common on Kos, are tethered in fields in the scorching heat of the summer. Using the evidence and information we have collected, we are drawing up a comprehensive complaint that will be sent to the EU authorities.

Unfortunately, immediate changes in such conditions are neither expected nor possible in the livestock industry. All over the world, these animals are kept for profit, the animals being seen and treated as commodities. The agricultural lobby is huge and the demand for animal products is still high. As long as this is the case, the most that can be achieved are small 'improvements'.



We are campaigning for these animals using various approaches. In addition to the comprehensive complaint to the European authorities, we regularly call the police to report how cattle are kept and have pointed out abuses to the authorised veterinarian. We are also in favour of a vegan lifestyle because all animals have a right to life and well-being.

Individual stories



Zelda und Alala

Once again, we received news that two small kittens had been abandoned in a plastic bag. We set off immediately, hoping that the two siblings were still alive. Amazingly, Zelda and Alala were not doing too badly under the circumstances.

We brought them to a mother cat who had given birth to six kittens a few weeks earlier. The two siblings were immediately accepted by their new mom and bonded with the other kittens. One month later they came to us at Stepping Stone and were looked after until they were twelve weeks old. Zelda and Alala developed into two loving, cuddly cats and were adopted by their rescuers at the age of

three months. Unfortunately, not all kittens are as lucky as these two siblings – many die due to malnutrition, illness, accident or disposal by humans. Neutering is essential to prevent such suffering.



Alma

Alma came into our care visibly marked by her past, extremely shy and frightened. We assume that Alma was kept as a hunting dog and at some point was no longer able to perform as required. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon on Kos for hunters to abandon their dogs when they no longer need them.

With lots of attention, love and support, Alma gradually gained confidence and showed that she felt at home at Stepping Stone. She loved playing with other dogs and could spend hours playing with her toys. Alma liked to be stroked for a long time by people she trusted, but she was suspicious of strangers and needed some time to break the ice.



Alma enchanted us all with her sweet and loving nature, and we are overjoyed that she has finally found a suitable home after more than a year at Stepping Stone.



Cat shelter

We provide shelter and professional care for animals in need. At our animal sanctuary, Stepping Stone, we look after homeless dogs and cats.

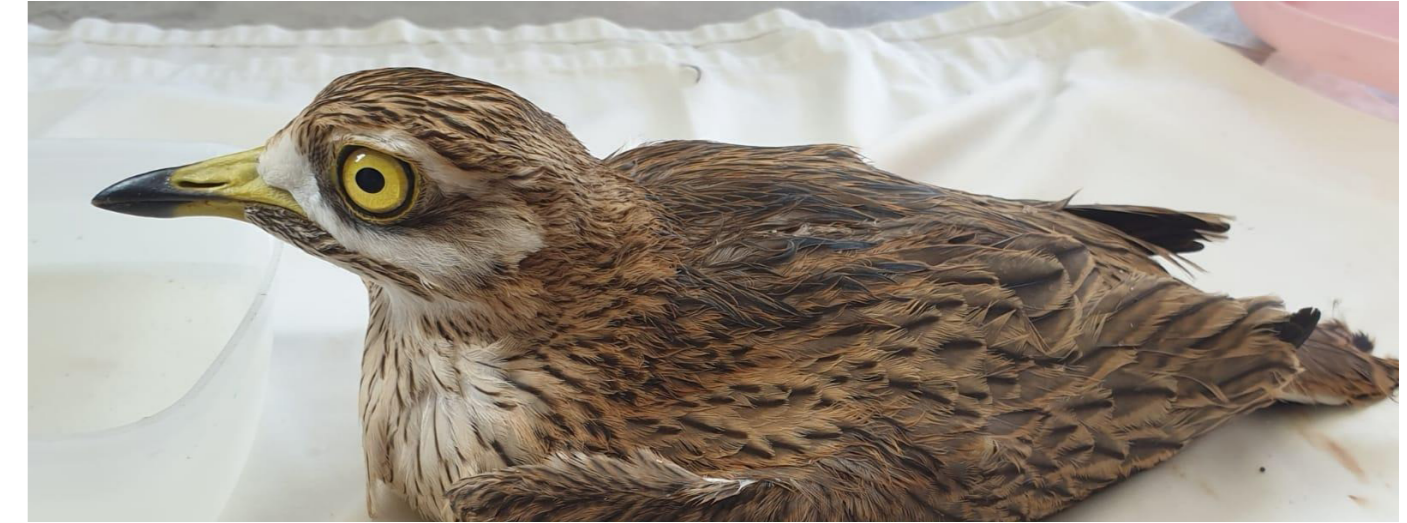
The legal situation in Greece has become stricter in recent years in favour of animals, which we very much welcome. This law affects animal shelters as well as animal owners. Among other things, the requirements for the size of animal enclosures have been revised. As a licensed animal shelter on Kos, we had to build a completely new cat house last year. It was a very time-consuming and expensive project but, despite many hurdles and difficult moments, we managed to successfully complete this project, thanks to your generous donations.

The crowdfunding campaign was a huge success, and we were delighted that so many caring people supported us. We can now house our cats in a safe and legally compliant building and continue to provide them with all the care they need.

A huge thank you to everyone who supported this project!



Figures



In 2023, we were able to help numerous animals in various ways. Below is a brief overview of the number of animals and types of treatment:

- Animals that received care at our Stepping Stone animal shelter:
 - 29 dogs
 - 100+ cats
- Cats neutered: 420
- Dogs neutered: 40
- Veterinary costs: over 26,000 Euros
- Operations and/or treatment for cats and dogs: 200+



Closing remarks

We are very pleased that we were able to help so many animals on Kos in 2023. Hundreds of people have visited us at the animal shelter and countless people have supported us, both actively and financially.

Without this support, our work on site would not be possible, so we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.

Animal welfare is and remains teamwork, and it needs every single one of us. We will continue to work tirelessly for the animals on Kos in 2024 and raise our voices for them. Neutering projects are already planned, further school visits will be carried out, and a formal complaint about the keeping of cows on Kos will be submitted to the EU authorities. The GASAH team will continue its good work and ensure that as many animals as possible can be helped in 2024.

Many thanks to all of you,

Your GASAH team



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GASAH - Greek And Swiss
Animal Help



Instagram:
gasah_animal_help



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gasah



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E-mail:
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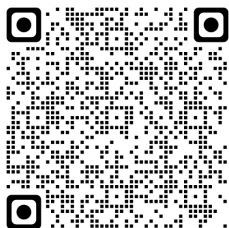
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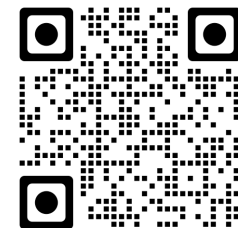
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