



18 Oct 2021

Dear [MP's name],

APPEAL TO END THE PRACTICE OF PIGEON POISONING

We are writing to appeal for your support in ending the use of poisoning as a population control method for pigeons in your constituency. We understand that such pigeon culling exercises have been carried out for years, in response to nuisance complaints received from members of the public.

However, pigeon poisoning is both ineffective and inhumane:

- Due to heavily reduced competition and high food availability after a cull, pigeon numbers can quickly return to pre-culling levels, **if food provision is not properly addressed**, as highlighted in various studies by Haag-Wackernagel ([1995](#), [2008](#), [2016](#)) in Basel, Switzerland.
- Studies have shown instead that targeting the availability of food sources is more effective. An [NParks 2021 study](#) "advocate[d] a **food limitation approach** to control the feral pigeon populations."
- Poisoning is currently carried out using the sedative drug alpha-chloralose. After ingesting the drug, pigeons can still fly for some distance away from where the poisoning exercise was carried out. This can result in poisoned pigeons being ingested by other species such as predatory birds ([recent case of an eagle](#)), dogs or cats.
- For poisoned pigeons that the contractors manage to retrieve, often live and struggling pigeons are collected and contained in trash bags for the killing process. Birds can regain consciousness during this period, resulting in even more suffering.
- The poison used for pigeons is also not target-specific and can harm other species or even people. In 2017, [a pet dog died](#) tragically due to poison ingestion. A [similar case from 2013](#) involved a pet dog and poisoned bait meant for pigeons. Similarly, community cats, birds-of-prey, snakes, and even children, could all be affected by poison meant for pigeons, if they accidentally come into contact with it.

With the above explanations as to the ineffectiveness and inhumaneness of poisoning, **ACRES and SPCA jointly urge Town Councils to stop the use of poisoning as a method of pigeon control.**

Pigeons have been culled for over a decade in Singapore, and yet the issue remains. We encourage Town Councils to look instead into **long-term** (2-4 years) focussed campaigns on direct and indirect food provision to address the problem's root cause. Long-term intensive programmes have resulted in substantial drops in pigeon numbers, as evidenced in Basel (50% drop in population in 4 years, [Haag-Wackernagel, 1995](#)). We have also seen the good example of Tampines Town Council's eye-catching public awareness materials (attached). ACRES is more than willing to provide support for long-term campaigns in terms of public educational outreach and materials.

As we move towards a City in Nature, we can certainly do better in creating a compassionate society. Thank you for reading this letter and we look forward to hearing your response, on your decision to end the use of poisoning and look into other methods.

Yours sincerely,



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