

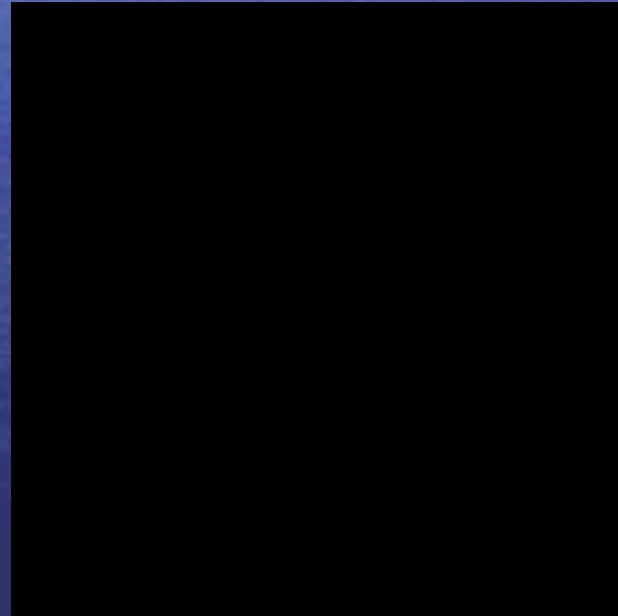


Animal Welfare

In **BULGARIA**


VIER PFOTEN-Bulgaria as a part of an international AW Organization has concluded three main points to concentrate work on in Bulgaria:

- Establishing and running AW projects
- Fulfilling educational and informational activities
- Lobbying activities




The AW situation in Bulgaria at present :

- 1. The society does have a deficiency of knowledge and strong attitudes towards AW
- 2. There is no AW Act in force at the moment
- 3. Being a country that is going through a lot of changes in each area of life, Bulgaria is starting to realize the need and the importance of AW

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- 4. Farm and stray animals are being treated by the Veterinary Act
 - 5. Wild animals are under the Biodiversity Act
 - 6. There is also a number of regulations and ordinances treating animals (keeping, transporting, slaughtering etc.)
 - 7. There is a stray dogs problem in Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has established a working group in March 2006. Working group's aim was to create an AW Act and its member were representatives from:

- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- Ministry of Environment and Waters
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Justice
- National Veterinary Services
- Municipalities
- Animal Welfare NGO's




VIER PFOTEN-Bulgaria was
invited to join the working group!



By the end of June 2006 the
working group made a draft for
the first ever Bulgarian AW Act!

The newly created AW Act draft should be voted in the Bulgarian Parliament by the end of 2006. The main points in the AW Act are:

- Castration and releasing of stray animals as the only one effective way for reducing stray animals population
- Strict rules for keeping animals in zoos
- Clear and efficient principles for transporting, keeping, testing, etc.
- Animals in circuses, pet-shops



If the AW Act draft passes the voting,
Bulgaria will have a good regulation in AW.

The main problem in Bulgaria in AW area at the moment is **stray dogs**. The actual at the moment law, which treats stray animals is the Bulgarian Veterinary Act. There are only two articles in it about stray animals – animals are being put in shelters and kept there for 14 days. After that period of time they are being euthanized if there is no person that has shown will to adopt them.

VIER PFOTEN could not accept the above mentioned method for stray animals population management.

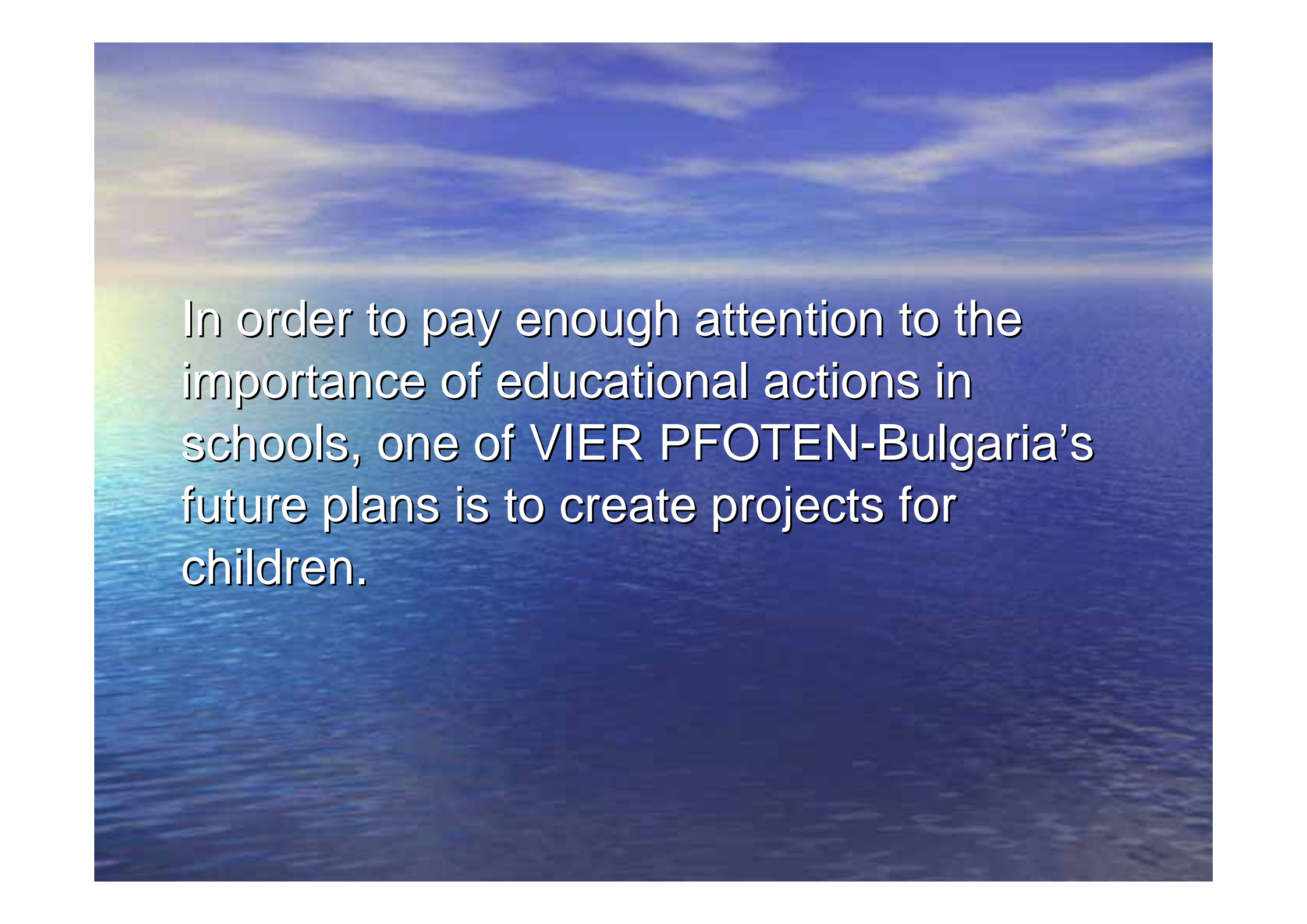
And that is why we are hoping to have the new AW Act draft voted. In order to help that happen we started **lobbying activities** in Bulgaria

Aims of VIER PFOTEN-Bulgaria's lobbying:

- To establish good and productive political contacts
- To provide useful information to MP's
- To impact political decisions concerning animals
- To give feedback from “the field” to the politicians about gaps in the legal acts

In confirmation of our view on how animals should be treated VIER PFOTEN has established the biggest bear park in Europe – the **Dancing Bears Park in Belitsa**.





In order to pay enough attention to the importance of educational actions in schools, one of VIER PFOTEN-Bulgaria's future plans is to create projects for children.