

Reframing discussions on Dog Health and Welfare

Responsible Breeding and Sourcing of Dogs



Think Globally, Act Locally



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- Veterinarian
- Epidemiologist
- CEO, International Partnership for Dogs
- Swedish collaboration since mid-1990's with Agria, SKK, and SLU

Goals

- *What do veterinarians need to know to understand current challenges around **health and welfare** of pedigree and other purpose-bred dogs – in Sweden and internationally?*
- *How do **responsible** breeding and sourcing of dogs enter into this discussion?*
- ***How can you – personally - engage effectively – starting NOW?***

WHY NOW??

Understand:

- **Challenges** in dog health/welfare ...
 - Petitions – Sweden, UK
 - Legislation - **Netherlands, Finland**
 - Confrontation vs. collaboration
 - Outrage culture on social media, personal attacks



Promote:

- **Collective, collaborative efforts for common goals** –Open, respectful dialogue
 - Maybe based more on evidence and understanding and a little less on emotion?

Link to talk resources on DogWellNet.com:

<https://dogwellnet.com/content/international-actions/think-globally-act-locally/reframing-discussions-on-dog-health-and-welfare-swedish-veterinary-conference-presentation-r714/>

Definition – dog health and welfare and human-animal interactions

What we say

- **Health** – absence of disease
- **Welfare** – absence of pain and suffering
- Support good **HAIs** – human-animal bond, but also everything people and dogs do together,, how animals enrich our lives and society, etc.

What we mean

Definition – dog health and welfare

... Human-dog interactions

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 - **Rate? Risk?**
- Problems if we generalize or across diseases, breeds, etc!

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- Adequate, acceptable welfare
 - **Not black and white!**

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“Pandemic Puppies”??

What we mean



Dogs as Status Symbols: A Tibetan Mastiff Sells for \$2 Million in China

Things are so out of hand, some say the country is in a "Mastiff bubble" – this can't end well.

dogedit | Mar 20th 2014



3/5 Tibetan Mastiffs, \$150,0000

The world's largest dogs were originally guard dogs, trained to protect livestock. True-blooded Tibetan Mastiffs are rare and the last Tibetan Mastiff was sold for a

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/take-a-look-at-the-worlds-most-expensive-pet-animals/tibetan-mastiffs-1500000/slideshow/64336226.cms>



Status?



People



<http://www.bulldoginformation.com/french-bulldog-history.html>



Oliver, [champion] holds the real deal. At just 20 months old, Oliver has gained his champion status for which we are very proud. He is DNA HC tested clear. Oliver is available to approved bitches only. Thanks for looking. FROZEN, CHILLED AND FRESH SPERM IS AVAILABLE. Oliver

<http://kalhofrenchbulldogs.weebly.com/our-dogs.html>



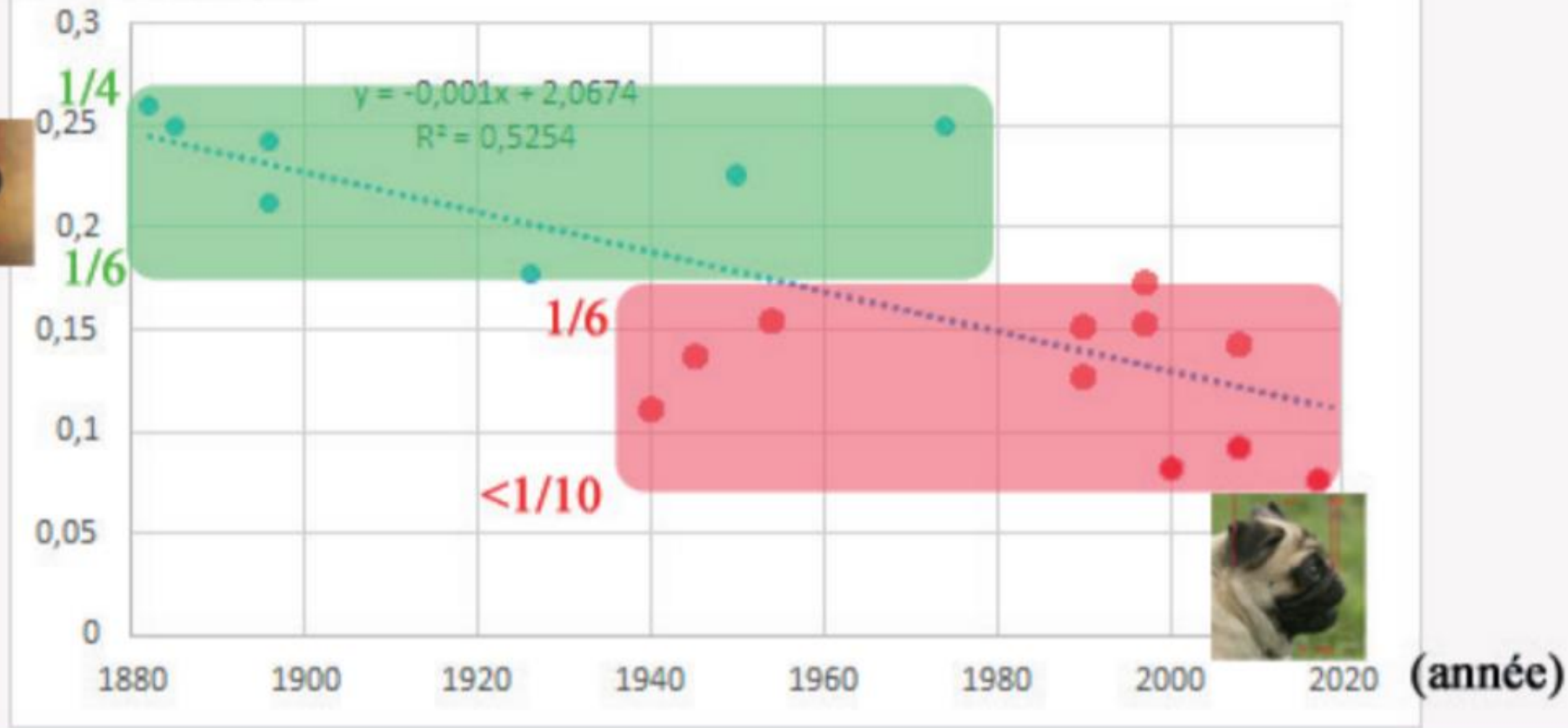
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Oliver, I
gained
tested o
looking

Indice cranio-facial

Carlin



2020 (Année)

bulldog breed

over 140 years

Purpose bred dogs

- But the 'purpose' has changed
 - **Fit for function... hunting, etc.**
 - **Companionship, appearance, status**



Hawbucks: “*We breed for health not show.*”

<http://www.hawbucks.nl/franse-bulldog/en/our-dogs/>



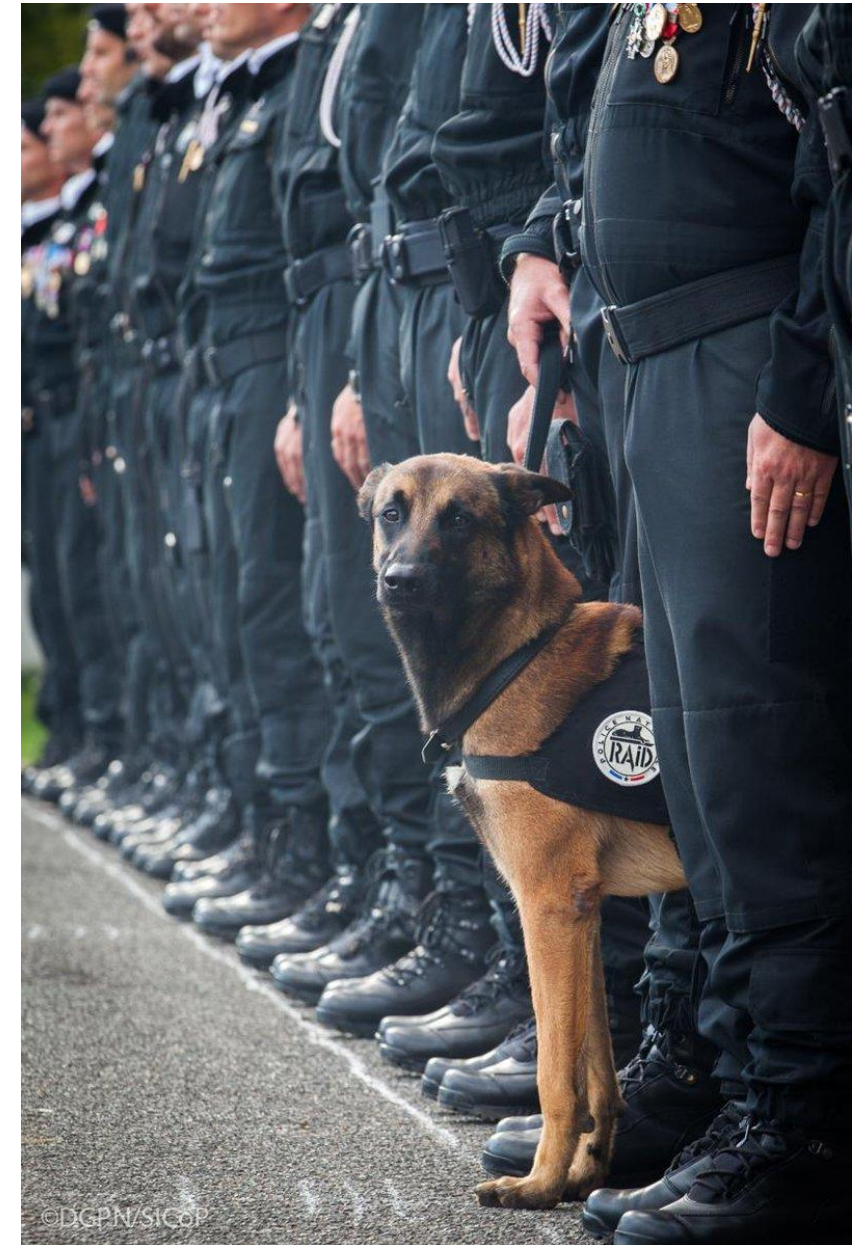
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/lifestyle/pets/11744491/handbag-dogs-fall-out-of-fashion.html>

Diesel the French police dog dies in St-Denis siege

Counter-terrorism animal killed in shootout with suspected terrorists from Paris attacks as police storm apartment north of capital



People



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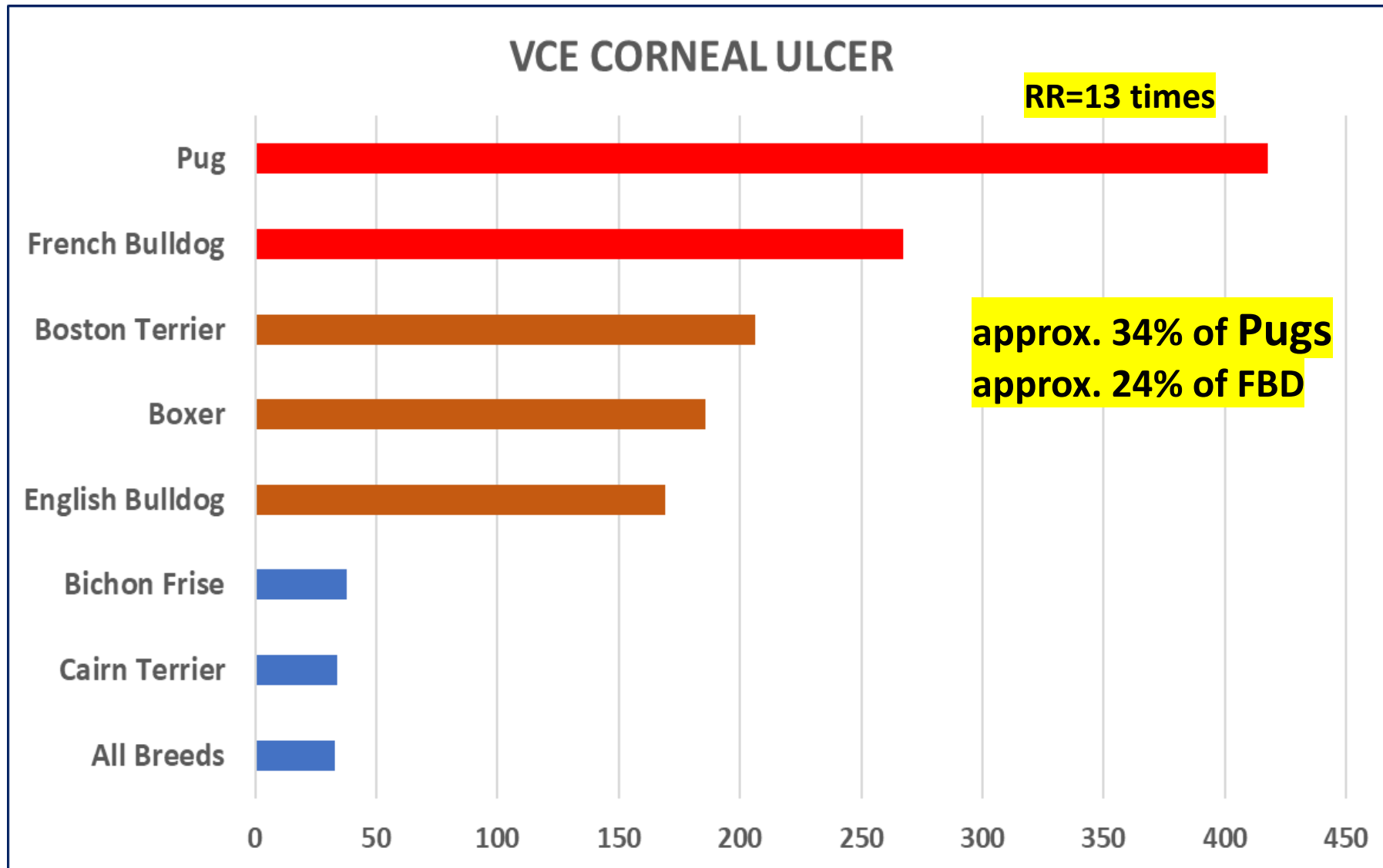
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 - **Rate? Risk?**
 - Obviously we run into problems if we generalize across diseases, breeds, etc!
- Adequate, acceptable welfare
 - **Not black and white!**
- The role and rights of PEOPLE?
 - Rights of dogs?
 - **Very different across countries**

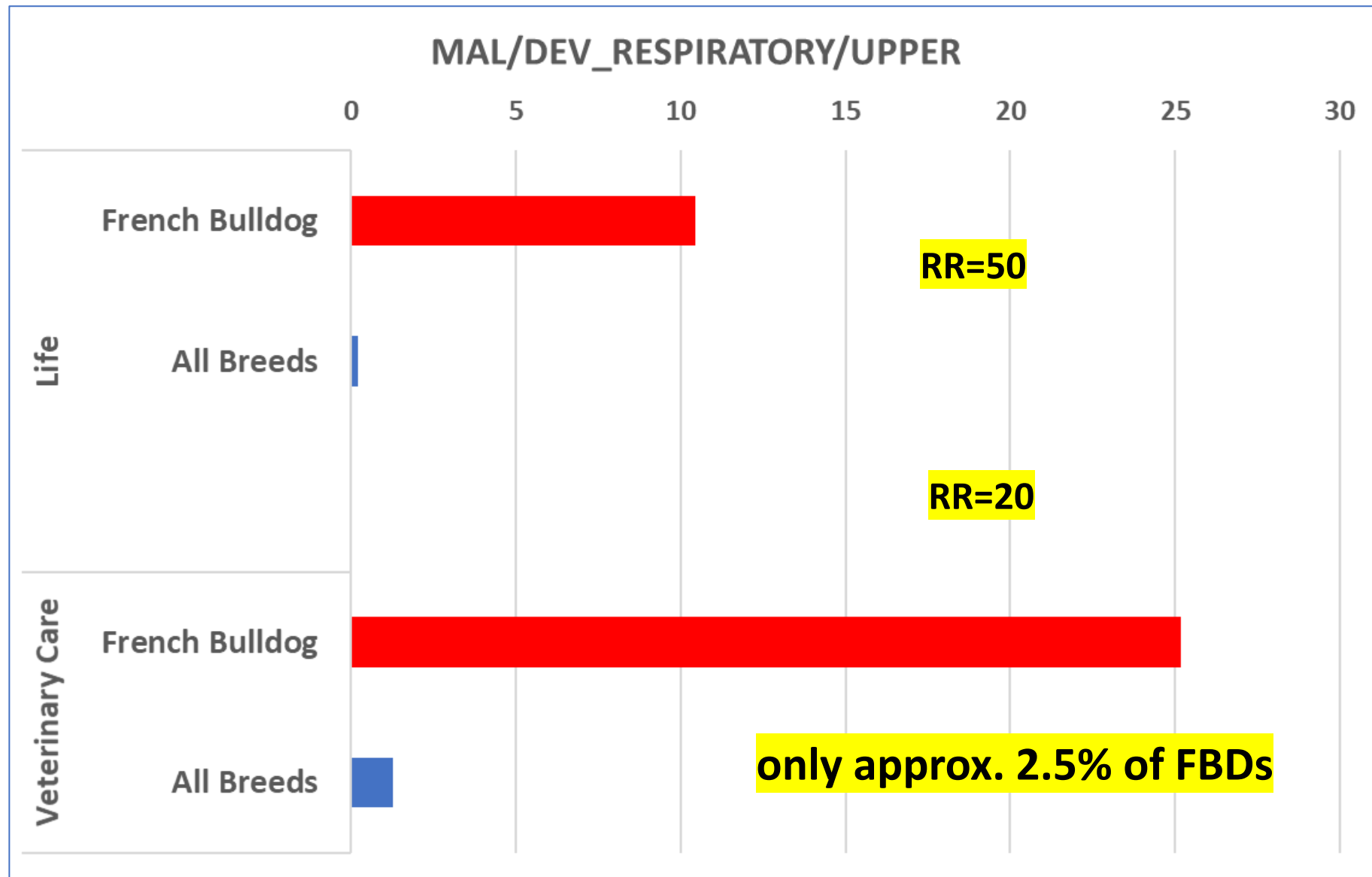
Who decides? Stakeholders, legislators, society, the individual, 'experts'?

**French Bulldog
Agria Breed Profiles
Veterinary Care 2011-2016**





Veterinary Care Events (VCE) Agria Data 2011-2016 Rates per 10,000 years-at-risk



Agria Data 2011-2016 Rates per 10,000 years-at-risk

So... challenges now? ... Brachycephalics

(some) in the dog show world...

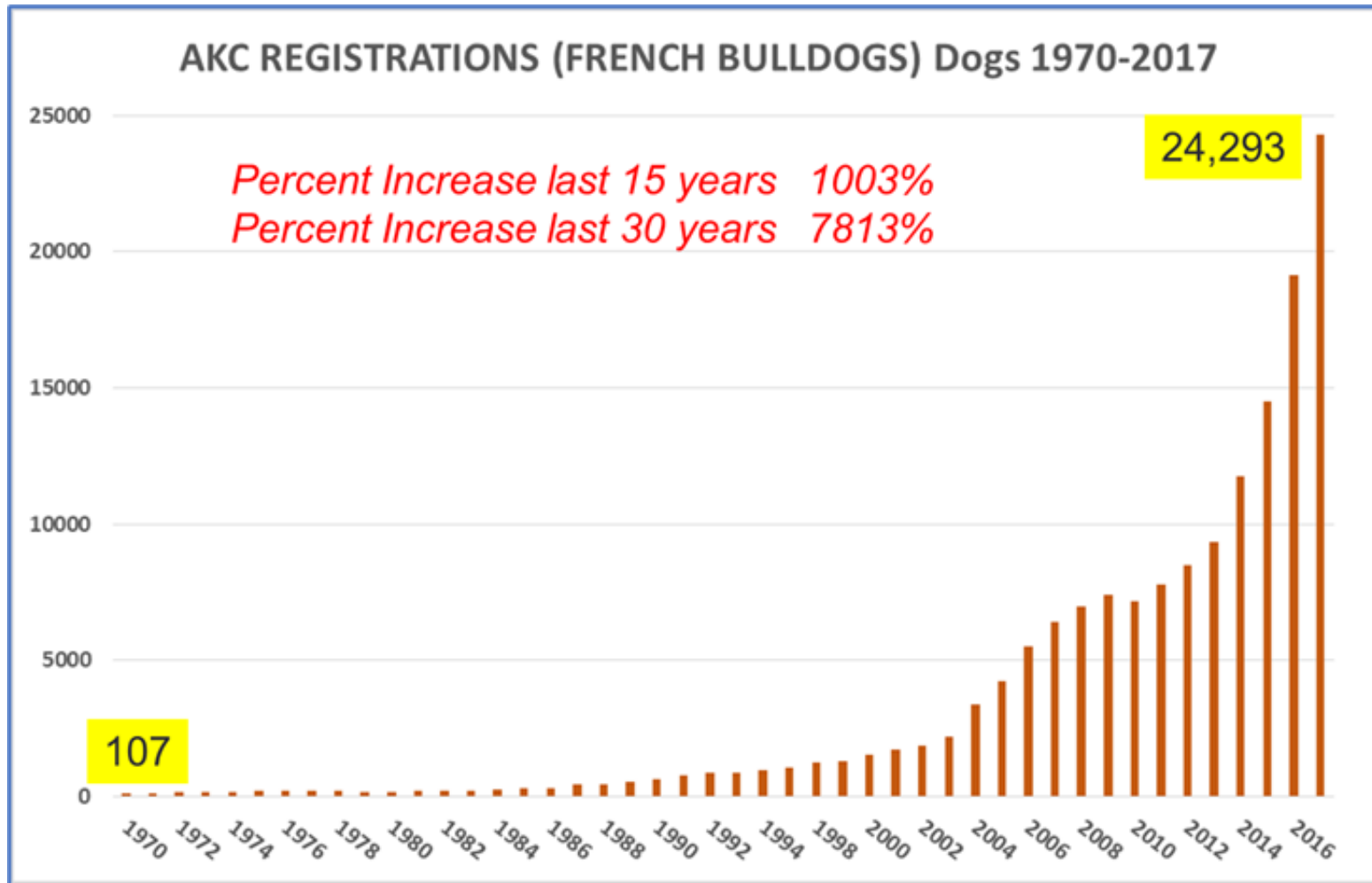
Breeders... Judges

- They are all okay!

(some) Veterinarians

- They are all sick/ compromised!

- **Perspective !** (how much is too much... clinical signs... history... personal attitude and agendas...)
- **Population !** (what dogs are you looking at?)



Owners do not recognize that their dogs are sick... and plan to get another one; Packer, et.al <https://dogwellnet.com/blogs/entry/174-come-for-the-looks-stay-for-the-personality-bulldogs-french-bulldogs-and-pugs/>

Lifespan/ median age at death (all causes) from Swedish, Finnish and UK statistics: 3.6-4.4 years of age.

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and rights of PEOPLE?

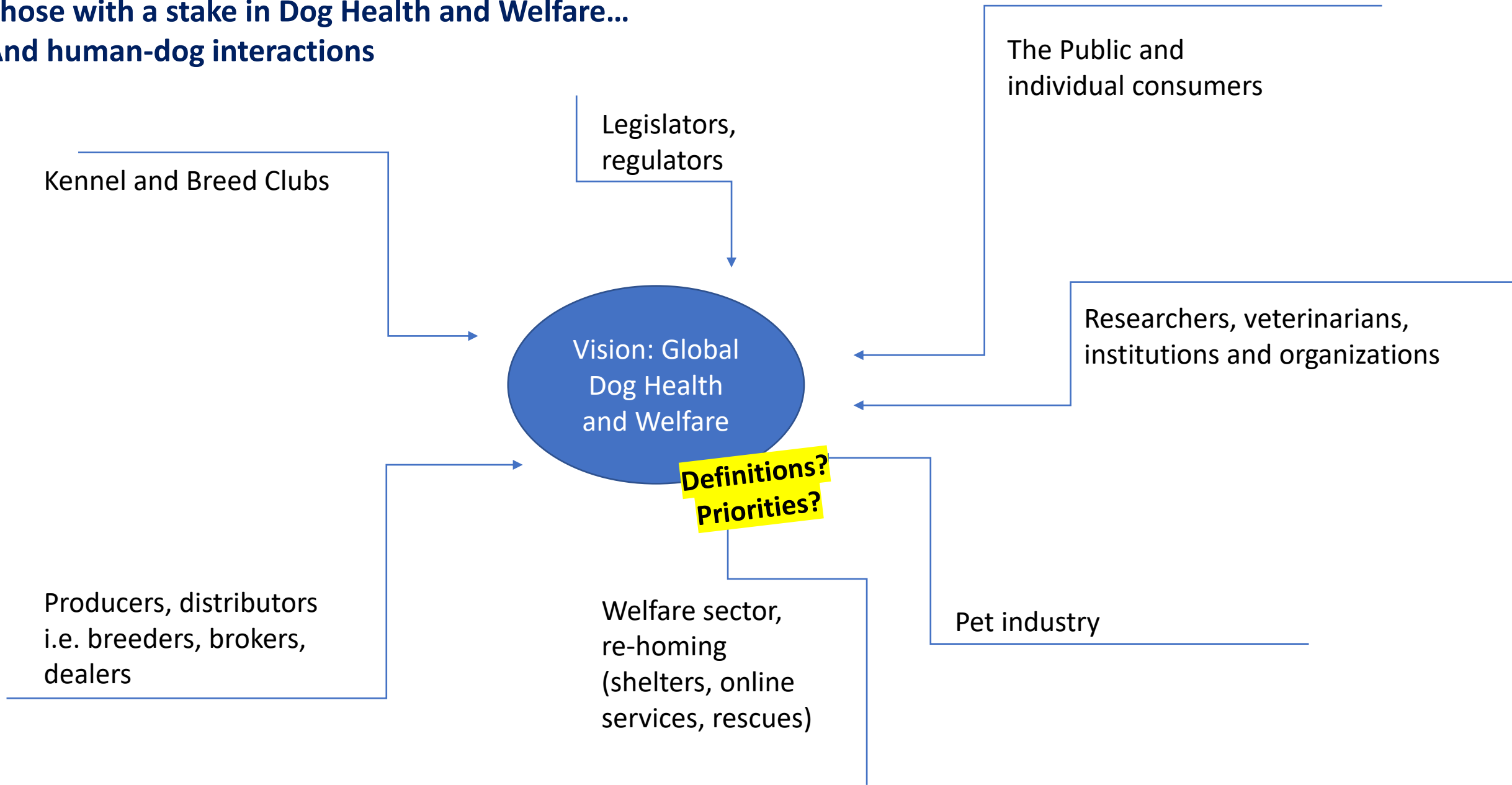
nts of dogs?

- **Very different across countries**

Complex problems ...

Are we looking for simple solutions?

Those with a stake in Dog Health and Welfare... And human-dog interactions

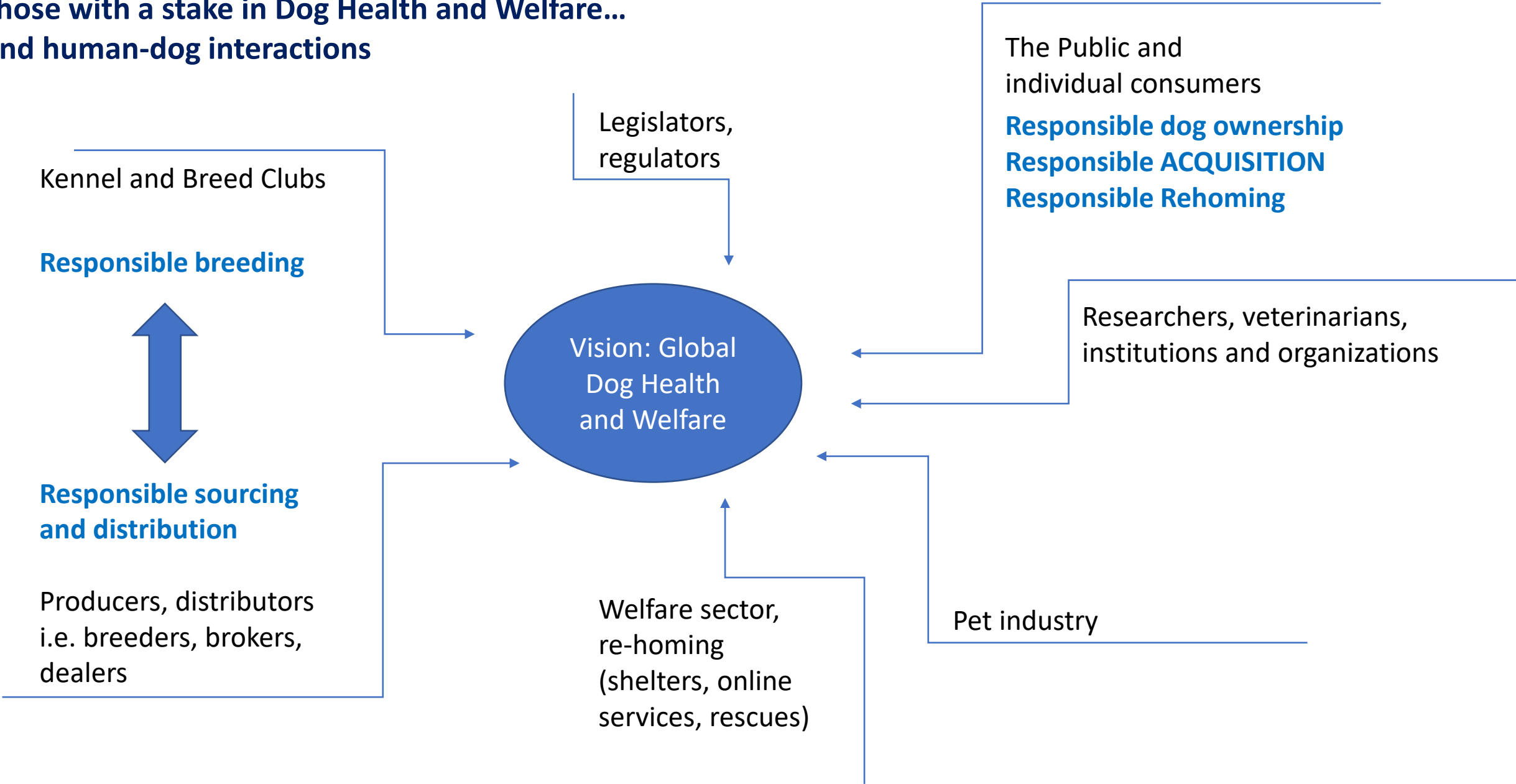


- IDHW... IPFD ...
- IPFD: Reframing Current Challenges Around Pedigree Dogs: A Call for Respectful Dialogue, Collaboration, and Collective Actions: <https://dogwellnet.com/content/international-actions/think-globally-act-locally/reframing-current-challenges-around-pedigree-dogs-r707/>
- Let's be sure it is **DOING** not just talking...

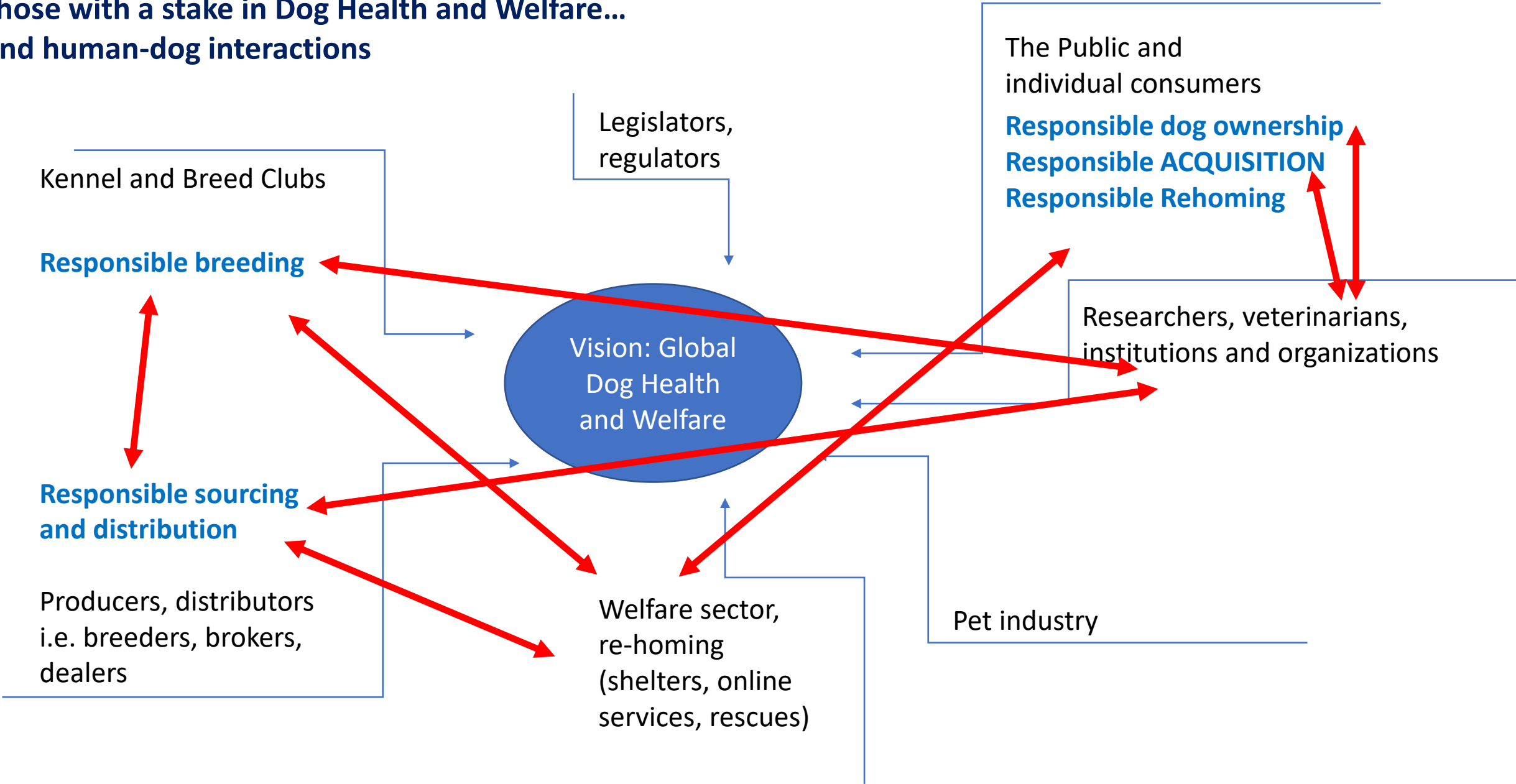


"A strong, committed effort, by a wide array of stakeholders, is needed to advance common goals for our canine companions." ... The International Partnership for Dogs.

Those with a stake in Dog Health and Welfare...
And human-dog interactions



Those with a stake in Dog Health and Welfare...
And human-dog interactions



Responsible Ownership – it is happening! *(here)*

- Sweden and Finland
 - Societal values for animal welfare, laws (enforcement)
 - Understanding of responsible pet ownership – supported and enforced
 - Historically associated with high proportion of registered, pedigree dogs, oversight of breeding, etc
 - **Excellent access to veterinary care, high rates of insurance coverage**
 - Somewhat lower proportion of households with dogs (e.g. compared to USA)...
 - *MAYBE people who cannot provide responsible level of care, do not get pets?*

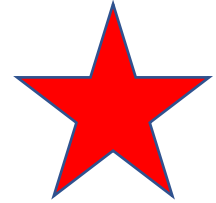
Responsible Breeding – it is happening! *(here)*

- SKK and Kennelliitto – visionary, responsible, high ethical values, and... TOOLS!
 - Linked pedigree and health data, statistics, indices
- Active and proactive for many years
- RAS and JTO, PEVISA
 - Evidence-based, insurance stats
 - Health strategies defined and followed

**French Bulldog
Agria Breed Profiles
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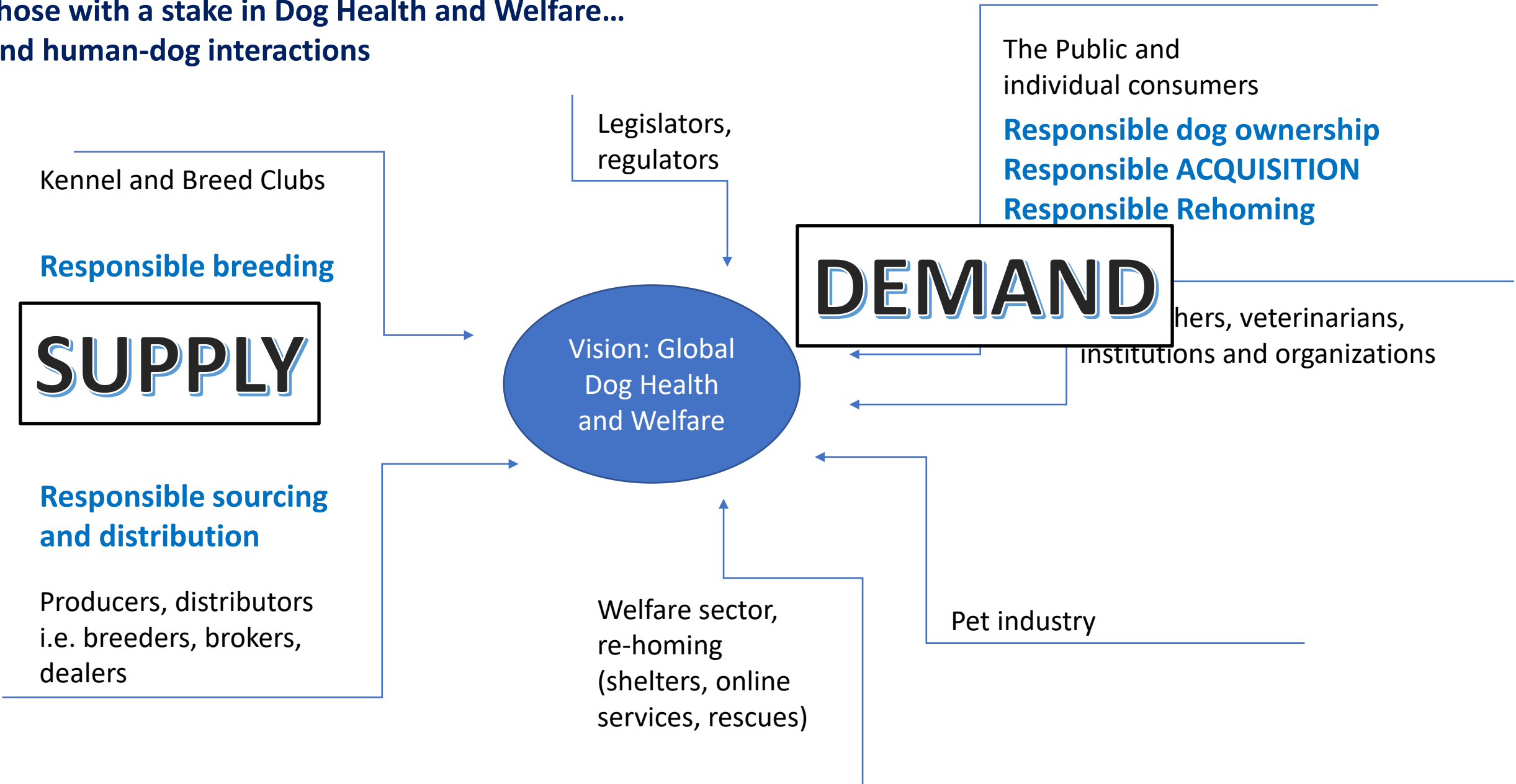


Swedish law... SKK recommendation



- **Straightforward?**
 - Do not use in breeding any dogs exhibiting clinical signs of disease.
 - But language leaves room for interpretation and depending on definition... maybe there will be no dogs to breed...
- **Clinicians** responsibility? Defining 'clinical signs'.
 - E.g. UK London Vet Show...statistics from Vet Compass are too low because vets do not record all brachys with breathing difficulties in the medial records.
- Australian paper... acknowledges that vets are in a hard position
- Are all the right people involved in discussion? Have to include people outside extreme breeds..

Those with a stake in Dog Health and Welfare...
And human-dog interactions



2020

Kennel and Breed Clubs

Responsible breeding

SUPPLY ??

Responsible sourcing
and distribution

Producers, distributors
i.e. breeders, brokers,
dealers

Legislators,
regulators

Vision: Global
Dog Health
and Welfare

Welfare sector,
re-homing
(shelters, online
services, rescues)

The Public and
individual consumers

Responsible dog ownership

Responsible ACQUISITION

Responsible Rehoming

X

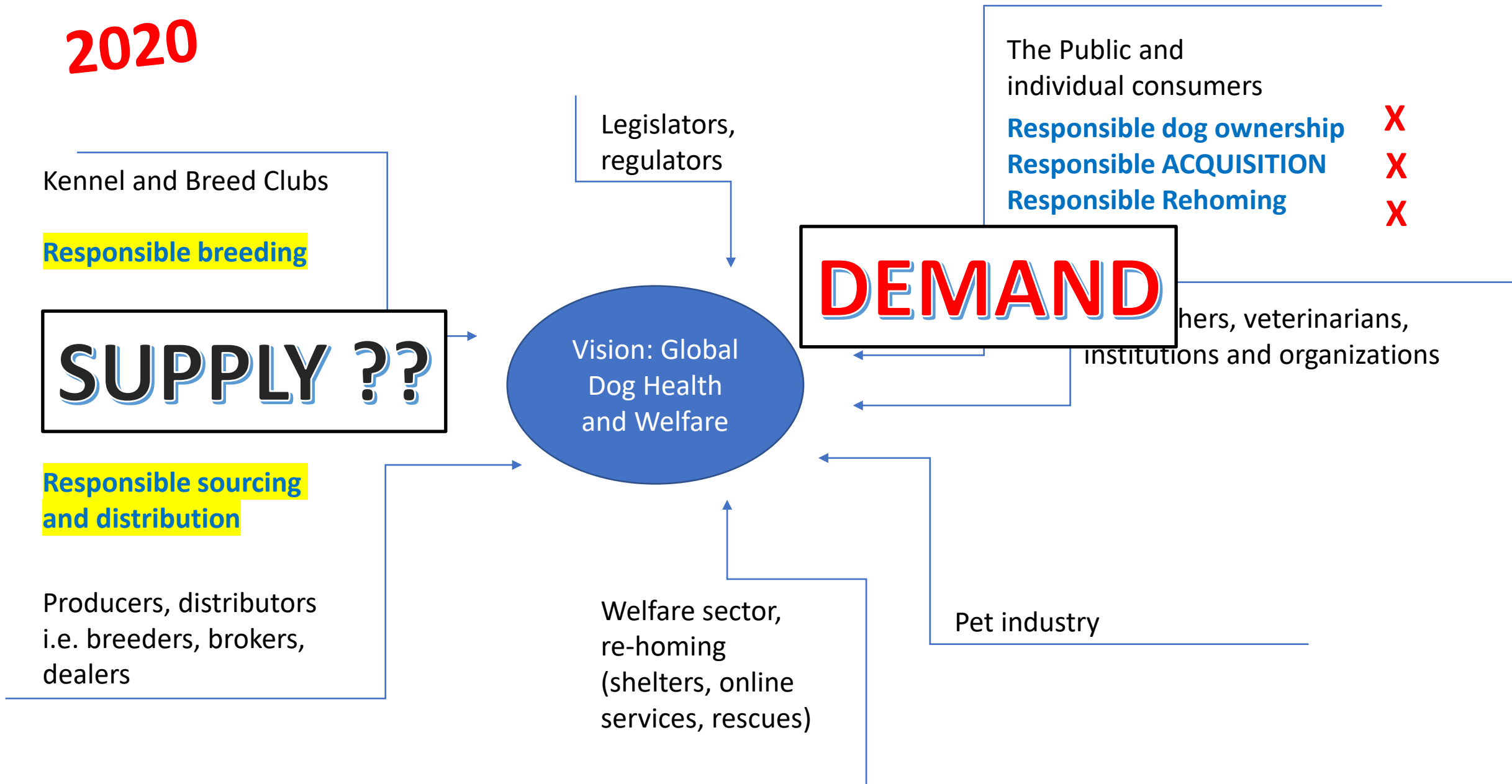
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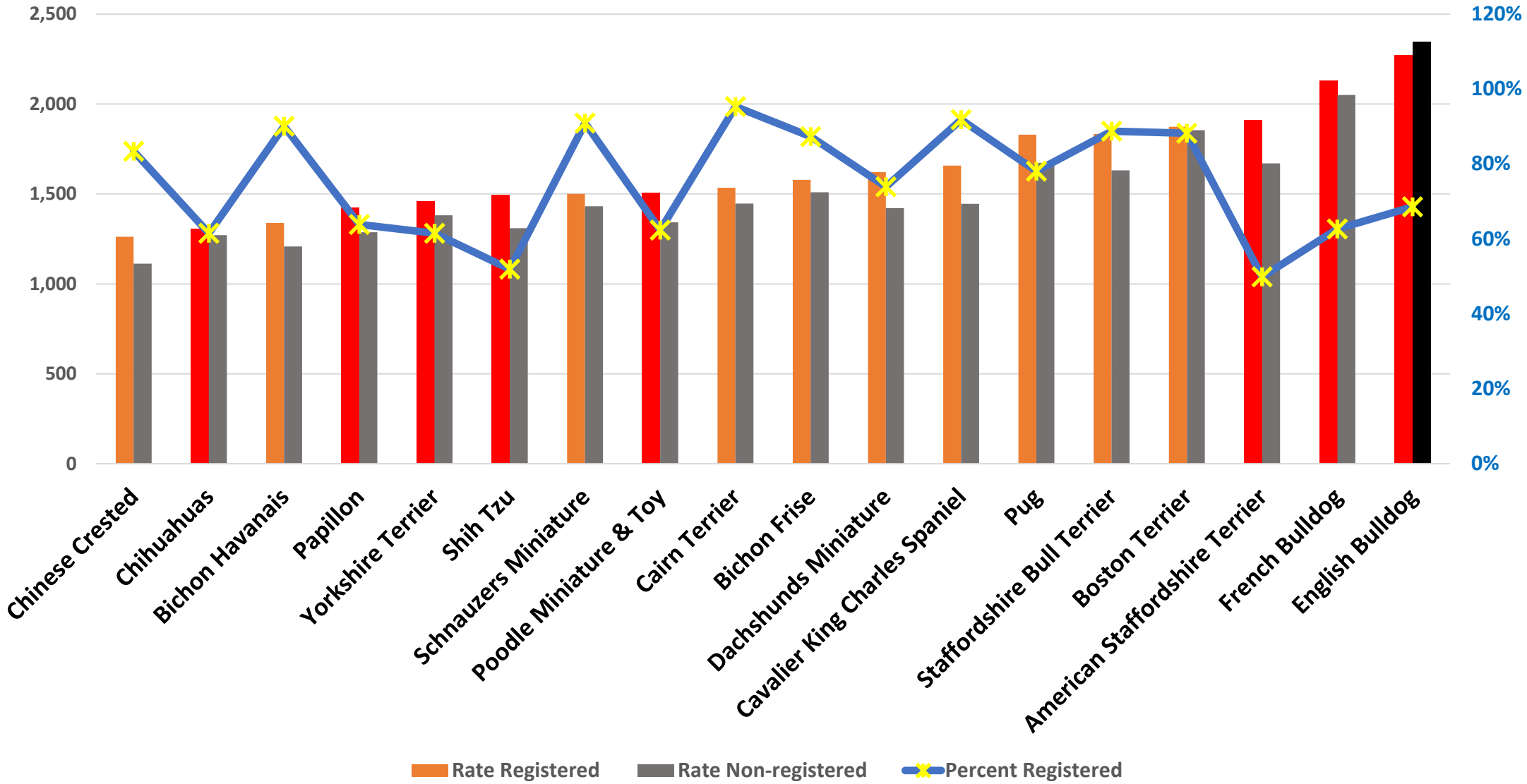
DEMAND

Others, veterinarians,
institutions and organizations

Pet industry



Rate of 1 or more Vet Care Events per 10,000 years-at-risk
Registered and NonRegistered Dogs; and % Registered.



Could we achieve CONVERGENCE?

SUPPLY:

Producers, sources



DEMAND:

Consumers

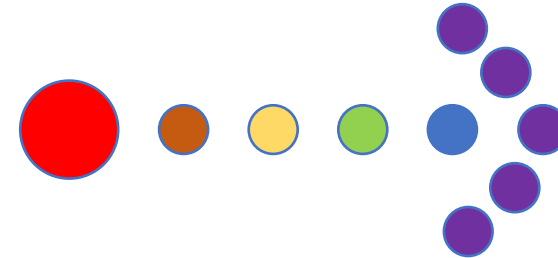


STEWARDS:

Regulators, Contributors

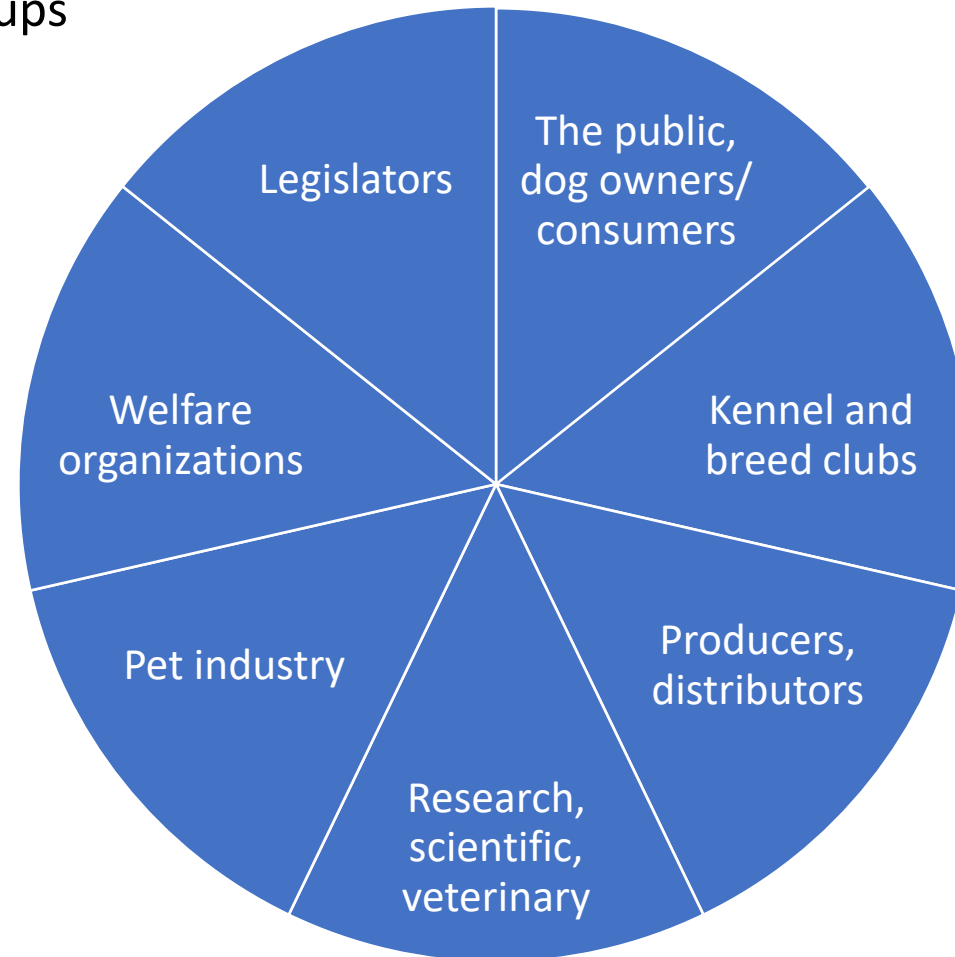


Dog Health
and Welfare
and Happy
People!



About these stakeholders:

- Individuals and Organizations
 - Overlap – many stakeholders wear more than one ‘hat’
- Diversity within and across stakeholders/ groups
 - Attitudes, history, beliefs about
 - Their own level of responsibility
 - Definition of issues/ problems
 - Willingness and ability to take actions



What all of us – every stakeholder and group needs to think about:

- Have you been a positive force for dog health and welfare? **What contributions have you personally already made to improvement?**
- Is there more you could do?
- **Have you learned about perspectives and challenges of other stakeholders** in order to understand their position/ limitations or mainly focused on your own world?
- Are totally **satisfied** with the way things are or do you want to be part of meaningful change?

Basics of actions - Talking is good but it is not enough.

- Take individual responsibility/ actions NOW... don't just wait for the organizations and regulators
 - **First take personal action**
- ***This far and no farther...*** do you have a line that you are unwilling to cross? Or did you already stumble across it? **What's your personal tipping point for taking action?**
- Quick wins?? **What can you do tomorrow morning?**

Research, scientific, veterinary:

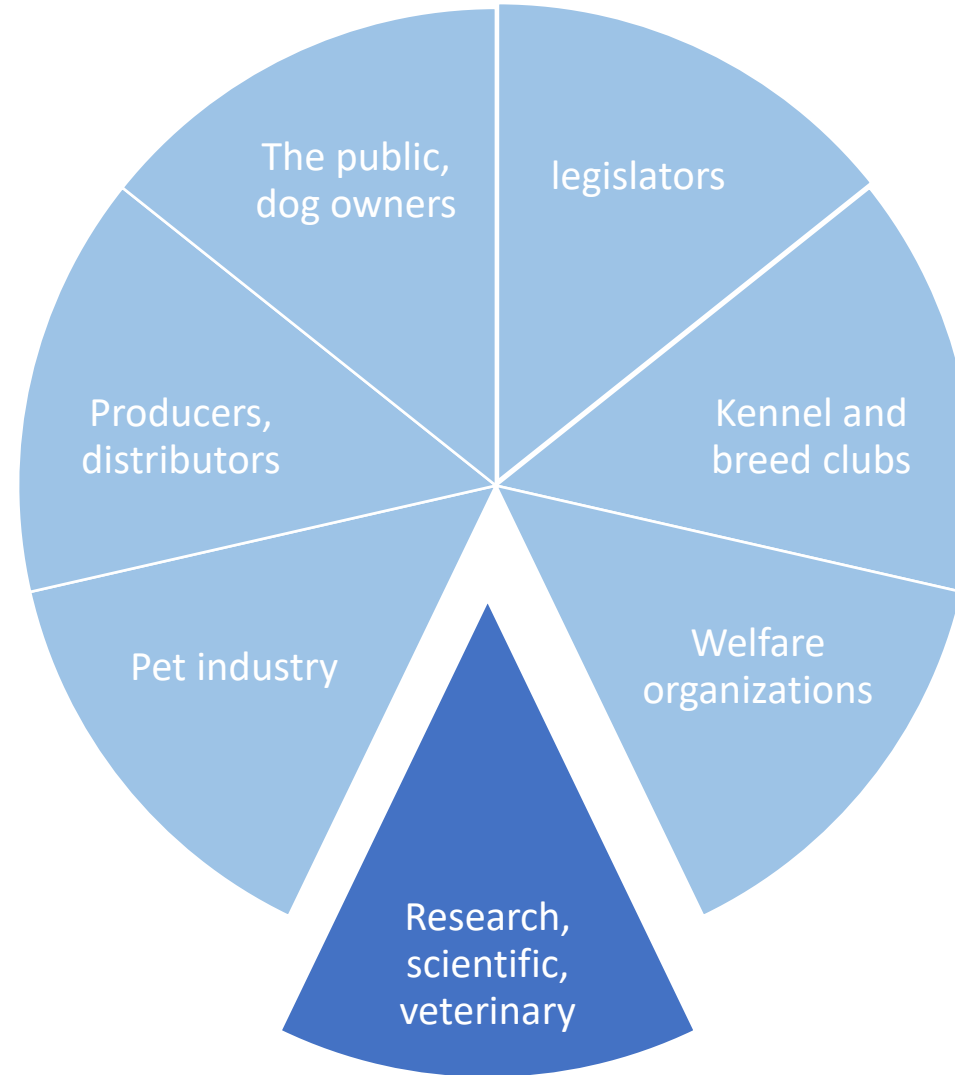
- Academic and frontline practitioners, bringing **data and evidence** to the issue

Challenges:

- Gap between academics views vs. action
- Saying things your clients do not want to hear about their dog

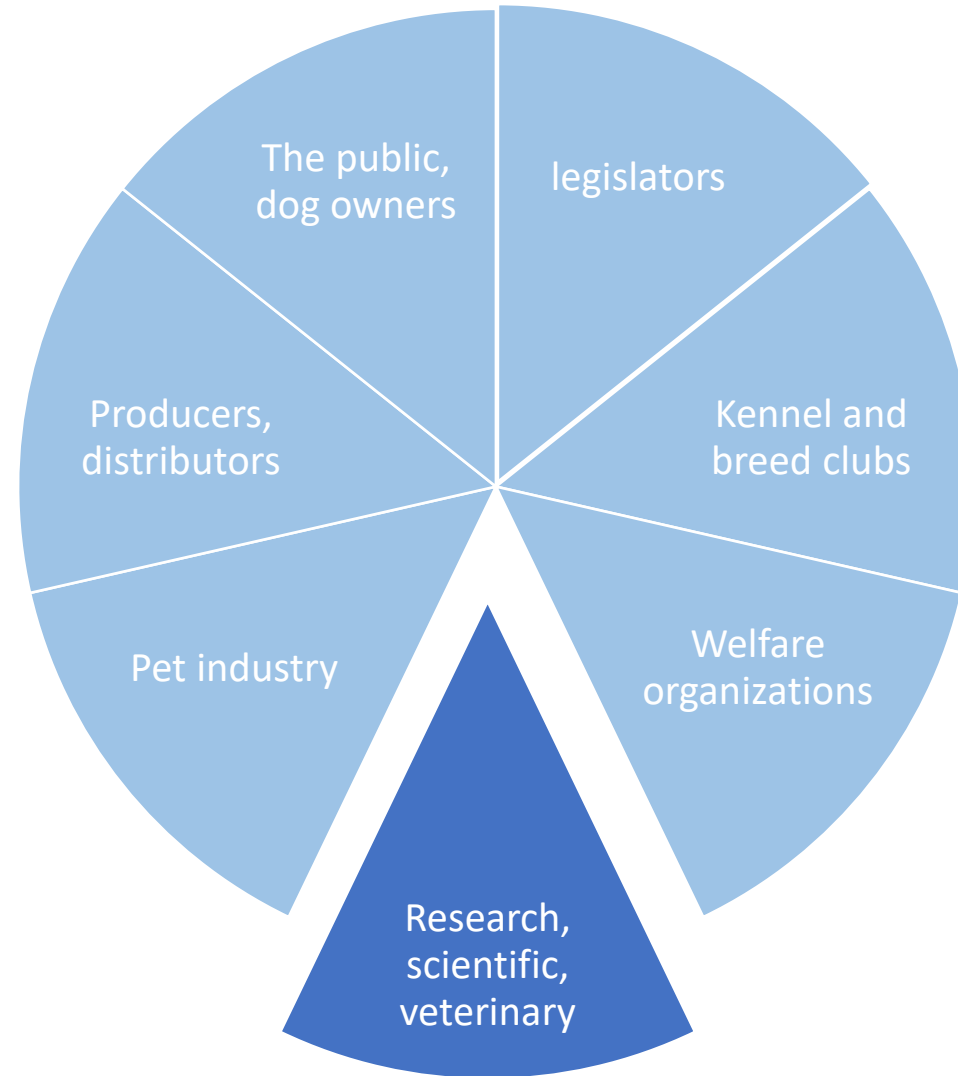
Potential:

- Influence owners and tackle “normal for the breed”
- Be a role model.



Guidance for Research, scientific, veterinary:

- Embrace evidence-based veterinary practices (EBVM)
- Contribute to practice record databases (e.g. VetCompass) to enable big data analyses
- Report correctional surgeries & caesareans to Kennel clubs
- Make research data available as open-access
- Publish lay-user guides to support published papers
- Develop tools to translate research into practice
- Work with KCs as independent, expert advisors



Pet industry:

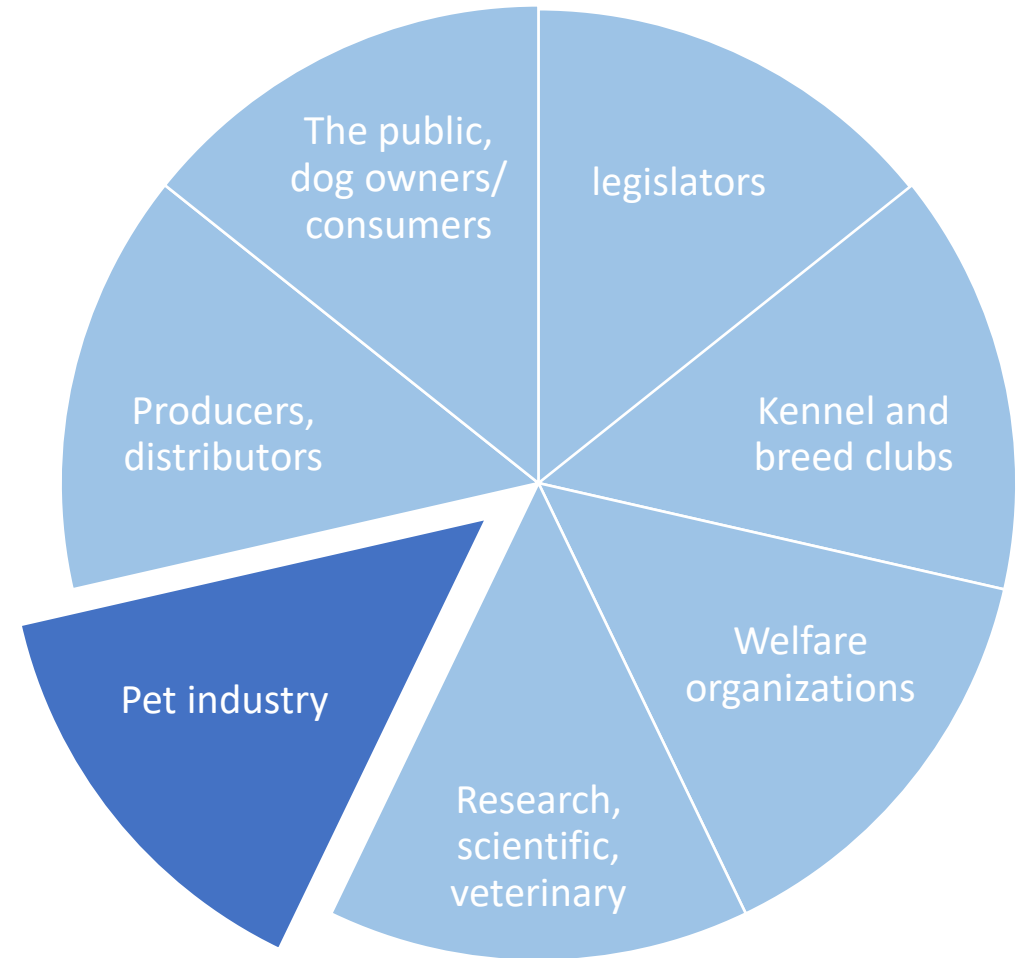
- Food manufacturers, accessory producers, dog trainers, behaviourists, advertisers

Challenges:

- Commercial imperatives in a competitive environment

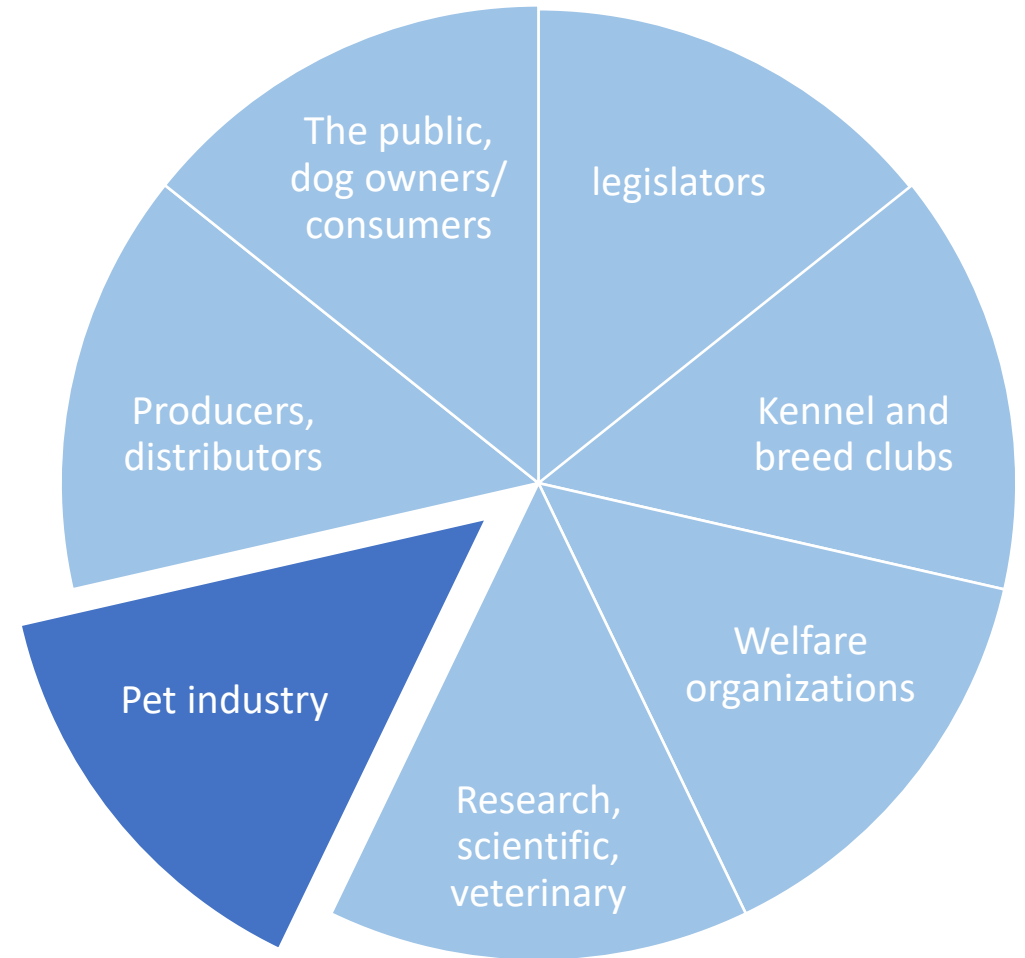
Potential:

- Corporate social responsibility to give something back to buyers of their products/services
- Coordination via trade bodies to send joined-up messages

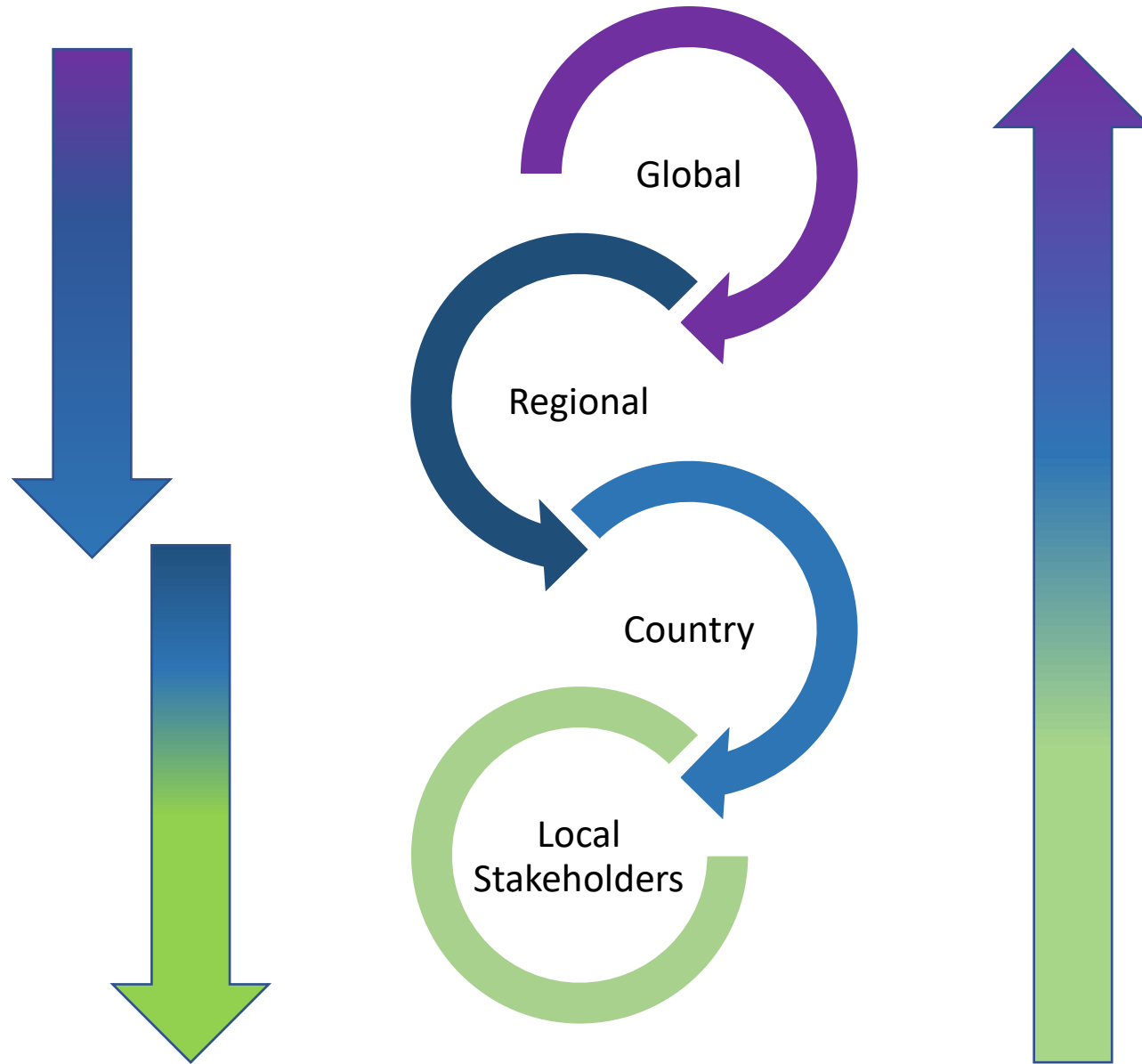


Guidance for Pet industry:

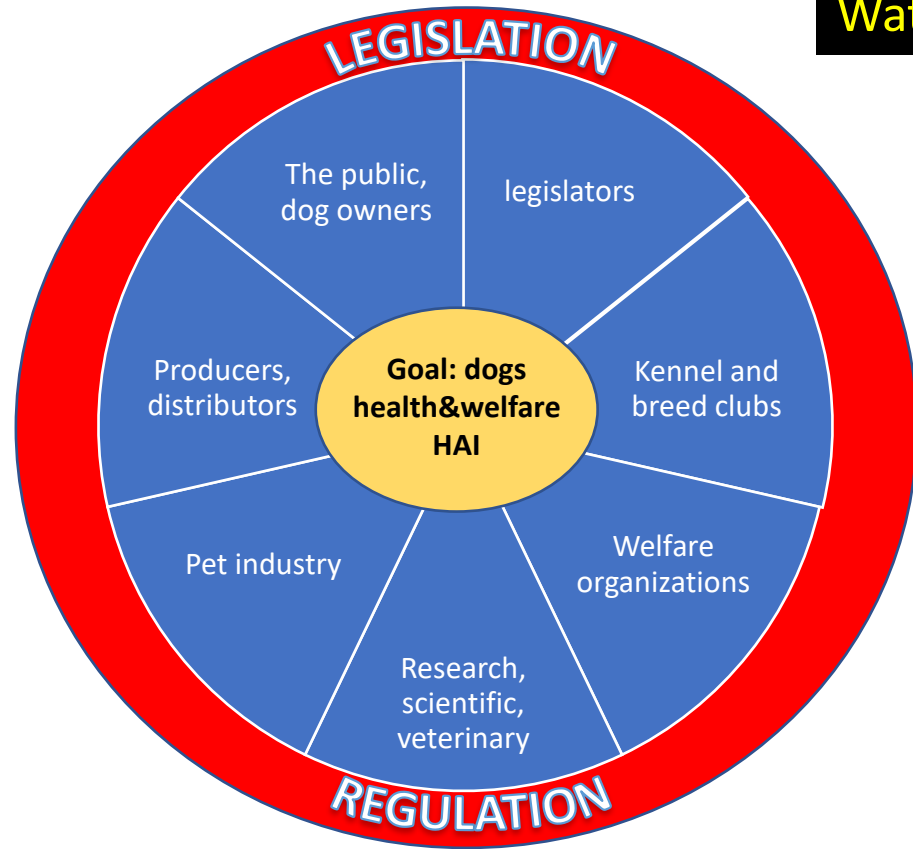
- **Avoid use of “at risk” breeds in advertising material**
- Sponsor applied research to develop tools for breeders
- Educate potential and current owners on dog lifestyle/welfare good practices
- **Support international efforts**



Dog Health and Welfare: Levels of Organization



Watch out for unintended consequences

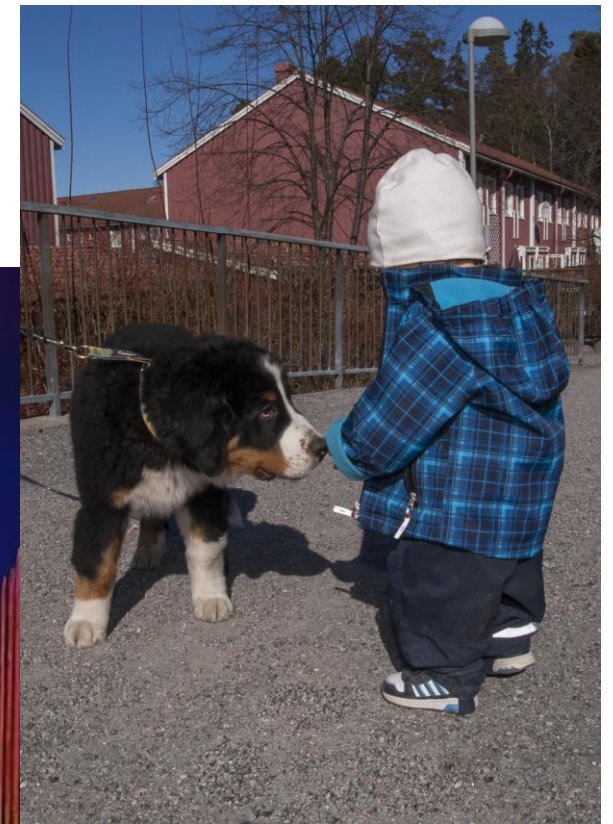


- **Complex**
- **Multi-stakeholders**
- **Supply & Demand**
- **Consumers**
- **YOU!!**
- **Respectful dialogue**

*“And that is how change happens. One gesture.
One person.
One moment at a time.”*

Libba Ray, author.

International Partnership for Dogs



*Tack så mycket
Thank you!*