



Mr Tan Hee Teck CEO
Resorts World Sentosa
8 Sentosa Gateway
Sentosa Island
Singapore 0982692.

enquiries@rwsentosa.com krist.boo@RWSentosa.com kris.koh@rwsentosa.com

2nd August 2011

Dear Mr Tan

I am writing on behalf of the Asia for Animals 2011 organising committee members, representing international organisations with extensive knowledge of animal welfare issues. We express our deep concern with regards the capture of 27 Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins from the Solomon Islands to provide entertainment at the Resorts World Sentosa Marine Life Park. Two of these dolphins have already died.

Confining dolphins to captivity presents serious welfare issues. Dolphins are wide-ranging, social animals and captivity presents a lack of the social, visual and auditory stimuli of their natural environment, leading to a life of severe deprivation, lower life-expectancy and higher infant mortality than in the wild. Dolphin tanks are small and cramped compared to the open ocean.

Live captures pose a huge welfare concern, as well as a conservation issue. The removal of individual dolphins from wild populations has serious implications for the survival of the targeted populations.

The capture is extremely traumatic and violent:

- Families are separated from each other;
- Young females are often targeted for interaction programmes
- Many dolphins die during the capture process;
- Studies are rarely conducted to ascertain what happens to those animals left behind;
- Once removed from their natural environment dolphins are transported to small enclosures which lack not only their families and social groups but also the natural open ocean that they are used to;
- Research shows that death rates increase six-fold during and immediately after capture

Once confined, dolphins must adapt to an artificial diet, strange noises and the proximity of people and other captive animals. Many will suffer from the stress of confinement, which often results in aggression and other behavioural abnormalities, illness and decreased resistance to disease, leading to reduced life expectancy and higher infant mortality than in the wild.

No captive facility can provide adequate exercise for dolphins, which are capable of swimming up to 60 miles a day, can attain speeds up to 22 mph, and can dive to several hundred feet, and can live for 40-60 years depending upon the species.

On behalf of all of our members globally, we appeal to you to organise the release of these dolphins back into their natural habitat.

Sent on behalf of the following organisations:

- Animal Guardians
- Animal People
- Animals Asia Foundation
- Animal Concerns Research & Education Society
- Humane Society International
- International Animal Rescue
- International Fund for Animal Welfare
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (UK)
- Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Hong Kong
- World Society for the Protection of Animals

Please respond to David Neale, Animal Welfare Director, Animals Asia Foundation, 10/F, Kai Tak Commercial Building 317-319 Des Voeux Road, Central, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
dneale@animalsasia.org

References

¹ R. J. Small and D. P. DeMaster, "Acclimation to captivity: A quantitative estimate based on survival of bottlenose dolphins and California sea lions," *Marine Mammal Science* 11 (1995): 510-519.

For further information please see "The Case Against Marine Mammals in Captivity"

http://www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/marine_mammals/case_against_marine_captivity.pdf

Copied to:

Minister Khaw Boon Wan
Minister for National Development
Ministry of National Development
5 Maxwell Road
#21-00 & #22-00 Tower Block
MND Complex
Singapore 069110

[KHAW Boon Wan@mnd.gov.sg](mailto:KHAW_Boon_Wan@mnd.gov.sg)

