

Submission
No 55

**INQUIRY INTO EXHIBITION OF EXOTIC ANIMALS IN
CIRCUSES AND EXHIBITION OF CETACEANS IN NEW
SOUTH WALES**

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Thank you for taking the time to consider my submission.

As a youth of today, I am deeply concerned about the prospects of my futures. Amongst these are the fact that animals are still forced into captivity under the excuse of 'entertainment'.

At the forefront of my generation today and 95% of Australians according to the recent report conducted by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, we believe that animal welfare is a prevailing issue. Therefore, we cannot sit idly by with the knowledge that keeping animals in captivity is undeniably cruel as they do not stimulate real experiences in the wild and often natural instincts much to the frustration of animals are compromised.

Furthermore, animals within captivity are also found to be in an easily distressed state developing symptoms of psychological distress named a Zoochosis. This can include rocking, swaying, excessively pacing back and forth, circling, twisting of the neck, self-mutilation, excessive grooming, biting, vomiting and coprophagia (consuming excrement).

Referring to the attached document, Dolphinariums have comprised dolphins of their available space, the complexity of the environment, the number of dolphins with which an individual can interact, and the impact of human activity on dolphins. According to the review conducted by Morgan & Tromberg in 2007 the stressors posed by captivity, have had adverse effects of dolphins as space restrictions limits escape from aggressive encounters with other dolphins, leading to stress or injury. Furthermore, to quote the supplementary file; "A review of cognition and current marine mammal enrichment has identified that captive dolphins need appropriate cognitive challenges which are relevant, motivating, controllable and possible to master (Clark 2013)...A study involving six dolphins to assess 21 familiar objects found that only 50% of the objects elicited manipulative behaviours". This highlights how having animals in captivity fails to provide the fundamental enrichment which affects an animal's state of wellbeing.

I understand that many individuals may enjoy trips to the zoo or even the aquarium, these once for me were wonderful school excursions and memories.

However taking a look at the case study of Bucky the Dolphin in Coffs Harbour, this particular Dolphin has been overworked due to the managers increasing his 'entertainment' schedule from two shows a day to three in peak periods as well as demanding more human-based interactions such as kissing and taking photos. This has allowed to go on, despite Bucky has developing cancer in 2013 and even as his 1-year-old son Ji-Ling, died after consuming sticks, leaves and a piece of metal in one of Dolphin Marine Magic tanks. Bucky has spent his 47 years of his life, equivalent to 80 years of human life performing needless and unnatural tricks which are foreign to him.

As dire as this sounds, the solution is clear and achievable. Animals should not be kept in captivity under any forms under the guise of 'entertainment'. Australia needs to promote its natural wild beauty as well as rich architecture and history, as our biggest tourist attraction is the Sydney Opera House and the Harbour Bridge and definitely not Sea World Australia.

Already, there is a potential open pen sea sanctuary on the cards in Coffs Harbour to transfer marine animals such as Bucky, which only further highlights the paradigm shift in Australia's relationship to animals and our evolving sense of ethics.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I hope you consider the certainly attainable future for Australia which is free of the horrendous nature of animal captivity.