

Submission
No 89

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

Name: Mr Bernard Kelly
Date Received: 11 November 2019

It goes without saying, that wild animals kept restrained in an unnatural and extremely small (compared to their natural environment) enclosures is wrong and should be stopped. It has been well documented by scientists that in order for a wild animal to perform it must first be broken. And that despite the best intentions of wildlife keepers, nothing can replace their natural environment particularly for larger animals.

How these animals are sourced must be investigated. The now well-known and infamous Taiji dolphin hunt (where some of the animals are caught alive to be on-sold to aquariums) is but one example of the horrific and unnecessary harm humans do other species.

The educative value of this confinement is minimal, if not nil. If people want to experience dolphins for example, buy a ticket on a whale watching cruise out of Sydney, and you'll get to see whales too. They will be in their natural environment, doing natural things not stupid tricks to "amaze" the spectators. Otherwise watch David Attenborough. It ain't that hard to find alternatives.

Confining wild animals for our entertainment is just so wrong, that it is astonishing it needs to be said at all.

The Government should commence a phase out of existing operations and outlaw new operations which confine these magnificent animals in unnatural circumstances. For land-based animals, sanctuaries should be established so these animals can live out their lives in relative nature, and certainly with the freedom they deserve. For dolphins currently held in captivity, this presents a challenge as releasing them back into the wild open sea may be a death sentence.

For current animal exploitation operations, the operators must disclose the living conditions of their animals (do their lions free range? No, I thought not - they are in a cage), how they were sourced and what they would enjoy if they were living in the wild (for example, lions are highly social creatures living in prides that can number up to 30 animals and multiple generations and range across hundreds of square kilometres). By advising prospective customers of this, people can then go into these performances in the full knowledge they are condoning the cruel exploitation of these magnificent animals. For dolphin shows, operators should be required to show excerpts of "The Cove" so people understand how dolphins end up in a big pool for their entertainment.

In summary, the work of this committee is pretty simple. To stop such operations existing in the future. No business is guaranteed a future and it just so happens that animal-based circuses and sea aquariums will need to adapt or close down. No different to any other industry that becomes irrelevant.

Thank you for reading my submission.