Gen Alpha says no to dolphin shows new research from World Animal Protection finds

Tuesday 5 September, 2023

Embargoed 05 September 2023 00:01 GMT An overwhelming majority (86%) of British children (aged 8-16 which includes Gen Alpha and Gen Z)* surveyed would prefer to see dolphins in their natural habitat in the sea rather than a captive venue. In stark contrast to 50% of parents surveyed[1] who said they went to dolphin attractions because their children would enjoy it, finds new research from World Animal Protection.

Just 13% of Gen Alpha and Gen Z respondents did not think that dolphin attractions were cruel[2], suggesting captive dolphin entertainment has become an outdated option for a fun family activity. When asked what was cruel about them 65% of kids said dolphins belong in the sea and 49% said the tanks look too small. When asked what if anything they thought was good about dolphin attractions just 27% said they thought the dolphins enjoy it and under a third (32%) think they are educational – a common justification used by the captive industry.

Comments from the children when describing their concerns about dolphin shows include:

- ‘Dolphins are too smart to be in cages and have to do silly things’
- ‘It is cruel, where is the family?’
- ‘They might want to explore’
- ‘They should be with their friends’
- ‘They might force them to do tricks’
- ‘Should be in the sea’
- ‘It's sad to see them suffer’

The research was conducted by Censuswide on behalf of World Animal Protection using a nationally representative sample of 1522 children aged 8-16 (defined here as Gen Alpha and Gen Z) and 2000 adults.

Just 34% of adults class dolphin attractions as acceptable and 62% are aware[3] of the negative impacts caused to dolphins held at these attractions. Sixty three percent would have liked to have more knowledge[4] about the impact of them before attending and over half (56%) would have changed their mind about going if they had more knowledge about them before they went[5]. Over a third (37%) feel embarrassed[6] to tell others they have visited one in the past and 34% have removed photos of these attractions from social media accounts[7].

Of the negative impacts adults associated with dolphin attractions:

- 53% cited stress and health issues
- 53% cited small tank
- 52% cited emotional and social trauma to the animals
- 52% cited disruption of habitat
- 46% cited exploitation and suffering
- 45% cited dolphin calves being separated from mothers

Media:

Related Sectors:

Education & Human Resources :: Environment & Nature :: Farming & Animals :: Travel & Tourism ::

Related Keywords:

Dolphin :: Captive Dolphin :: Animals (Low Welfare Activities Abroad) Bill :: Wildlife Attractions ::

Scan Me:

- 43% cited dolphins being kept hungry before a performance
- 40% cited dolphins living in chemically treated water

This week (September 5th
2023) the Animals (Low Welfare Activities Abroad) Bill will go through committee stage in the House of Lords. The Bill aims to prohibit the domestic sale and advertising of low welfare animal activities abroad. It is hoped that captive dolphin venues will be included on the list of prohibited activities.

Lord Black of Brentwood, taking the Bill through the House of Lords said "*Dolphins used for entertainment endure miserable lives and their suffering must stop. These highly intelligent creatures can be deprived of food to train them, and they are kept in confined, featureless tanks that are 200,000 times smaller than their natural home range. A five-minute holiday thrill swimming with dolphins or watching a show condemns them to a lifetime of suffering. This polling shows that young people do not support animal exploitation. We must listen to them and stop travel companies profiting from their suffering. The government must ban the domestic sales and advertisement of dolphin entertainment abroad."*

Over half (55%) of adults surveyed said they would support a ban[8] on the UK sale and promotion of dolphin attractions abroad. Sixty percent believe travel companies should be held accountable[9] for the impact that wild animal attractions that they promote and sell have on the well-being of the animals. A further 60% believe the travel industry should take a stand against promoting captive dolphin shows[10] and over half (57%) are more likely to support a travel company that actively promotes animal friendly attractions[11].

Dolphins are highly intelligent, sociable animals that suffer mentally and physically every day in captivity. Confined to tiny, barren tanks where they can only swim a few meters in any direction. These tanks are around 200k times smaller than their home range in the wild. They are often exposed to infection, harsh chemicals and regularly drugged to cope with captivity. The anxiety and stress can cause them to self-mutilate and to become aggressive.

Katheryn Wise, World Animal Protection, Wildlife Campaign Manager said, *"We hear time and again that parents take their children to dolphin attractions to create memories, but as younger generations become increasingly aware of the cruelty associated with captive wildlife attractions these are more likely to become regrets. Children know inherently what is fair and unfair and it seems that they instinctively know that keeping an intelligent, wild animal in a tiny pool is unfair. It is up to us as a society to nurture this instinct and foster respect and compassion for wildlife rather than exploit it.*

"The tide is turning, many travel providers are choosing to cut ties with captive dolphin attractions but unlike major brands such as Booking.com and Expedia, TUI Group is still profiting from dolphin exploitation – by selling tickets to cruel dolphin shows at around 25 entertainment venues across the globe. World Animal Protection is calling on TUI Group and other remaining travel companies including GetYourGuide and Jet2Holidays to end the sale of these cruel attractions."

World Animal Protection's campaign calling on TUI Group to end the sale and promotion of cruel captive dolphin venues has already received 100, 000 petition signatures with TUI customers and employees reporting that they are angry and disappointed that the travel giant continues to profit from this cruelty.

Click here to join the movement and sign the petition.

*Children aged 8 -16 were surveyed which includes Generation Alpha (those born between 2010 and 2023 0 -10 years) and some of Gen Z (those born between 1997 and 2012 11-26 years).

References

1-11 *Combining answer options 'Strongly agree' and 'Somewhat agree'*

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- To arrange an interview or for further information please contact pressofficer@worldanimalprotection.org.uk.
- The research was conducted by Censuswide, among a sample of 2000 Nationally representative

UK respondents. The data was collected between 14.08.2023 – 17.08.2023. Censuswide abides by and employs members of the Market Research Society and follows the MRS code of conduct which is based on the ESOMAR principles.

- Images and footage of captive dolphin venues here

About World Animal Protection

World Animal Protection is the global voice for animal welfare, with more than 70 years' experience campaigning for a world where animals live free from cruelty and suffering.

We have offices in 12 countries and work across 47 countries. We collaborate with local communities, the private sector, civil society, and governments to change animals' lives for the better. Our goal is to change the way the world works to end animal cruelty and suffering for both wild and farmed animals. Through our global food system strategy, we will end factory farming and create a humane and sustainable food system, that puts animals first. By transforming the broken systems that fuel exploitation and commodification, we will give wild animals the right to a wild life. Our work to protect animals will play a vital role in solving the climate emergency, the public health crisis, and the devastation of natural habitats.

Company Contact:

World Animal Protection UK

T. 07814 695 298
E. emilycunningham@worldanimalprotection...
W. https://www.worldanimalprotection.org.uk

Additional Contact(s):
George White
Georgewhite@worldanimalprotection.org.uk

View Online

Additional Assets:
https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/0ozfc5xrz1nznr7are7vs/h?rlkey=5jpoba8e82qbfdaxdqv2h3eaq&dl=0

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.worldanimalprotection.pressat.co.uk