Wildlife abusement parks

Wildlife tourism entertainment in Bali, Lombok and Gili Trawangan

WORLD ANIMAL PROTECTION

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Cover image: Chained monkeys, a side attraction at a turtle venue.

Executive summary

Across the world, and throughout Asia, wild animals are being taken from the wild, or bred in captivity, to be used in the tourism entertainment industry. They will suffer at every stage of this cruel process and throughout their lives in captivity.

Wild animals captured from the wild, taken from their families, are being forced to endure painful and intensive training to make them perform, and to interact with people. They live their entire lives in captive conditions that cannot meet their needs. A life in tourist entertainment is no life for a wild animal. It is inherently cruel and abusive.

World Animal Protection moves the world to protect wild animals from cruelty, and to help keep them in the wild where they belong.

This report documents the scale of wildlife used for entertainment by the tourism industry on Bali and Lombok, Indonesia, and reviews how much, or how little regard for welfare was given to captive wild animals at entertainment venues. It also provides recommendations to address and phase out the suffering of animals exploited by this industry.

This report calls on governments, the travel industry, individual travellers and local communities to take action to protect wild animals from exploitation and ensures wild animals remain where they belong – in the wild.

Wildlife tourism entertainment in Bali, Lombok and Gili Trawangan

This report highlights the findings of our November 2017 research into the lives of hundreds of captive wild animals in parts of Indonesia. A total of 26 wildlife venues were surveyed during November 2017 – on Bali, and one on both Lombok and Gili Trawangan. The majority of these were venues offering wildlife tourism entertainment, while a small number of facilities focussed primarily on animal rescues. The venues used elephants, turtles, dolphins, orangutans, civets and a variety of other species for entertainment activities with visitors.

We observed more than 1,500 animals being used within entertainment venues, both as exhibits and in activities such as shows. This included 62 elephants; 48 primates, nine tigers, 13 dolphins, nearly 300 sea turtles, 80 civet cats and various other species, including flying foxes.

Elephant rides or elephant shows, selfie opportunities with orangutans, or swimming with dolphins were commonly offered activities at these venues. While smaller venues offered somewhat more individual experiences, other larger-scale venues housed high profile animals that were used throughout the day in interaction with large audiences.

Scale of animal suffering

- Of the venues visited, 100% of those with captive wild elephants, tigers, dolphins or civet cats, and 80% of those with captive wild primates did not meet even the basic needs of captive wild animals. The single turtle venue using turtles as entertainment – as opposed to the three turtle hatchery venues focused on turtle rescue and release for conservation purposes – also did not meet the basic needs of captive wild turtles.
- At one of the dolphin entertainment venues, dolphins have had their teeth filed down or removed entirely, to ensure that they are unable to inflict serious bites on swimmers.
- Key welfare issues that lead to suffering in captive conditions were found to be:
  - extreme restraint, through chains or cages
  - limited opportunity to naturally socialise with other animals
  - participation in stressful and potentially harmful activities, including interaction with people and performing in shows
  - non-existent or insufficient veterinary care
  - inadequate nutrition and diet for some captive wild animals
- Unlike in other regions, as documented in our 'Taken for a Ride' report, there were no captive wild elephant venues that provided improved animal welfare standards by offering observation-based elephant experiences. All of the elephant venues surveyed offered elephant rides, which requires painful training to gain control over the elephants, exposes them to stressful situations and restricts them from behaving according to their needs.
- Education on the importance of protecting wild animals was extremely rare, with only one turtle venue offering more comprehensive educational activities at its venue.

Keeping wild animals in the wild

Across the areas studied, as well as in Asia and globally, there is clear evidence of wild animals suffering in the tourism entertainment industry throughout their lives. Cruel training, inadequate husbandry conditions, poor veterinary care, capturing in the wild or disruption of family units when captive – bred – all of these lead to lifelong suffering of wild animals, often invisible to the visitor.

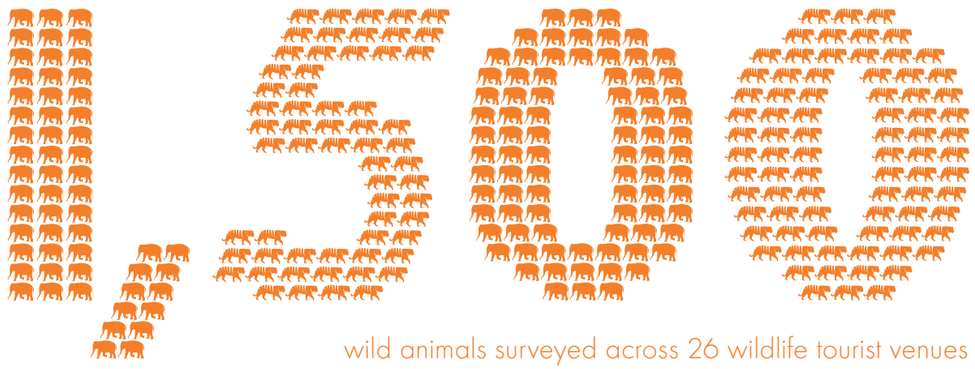
Wild animals belong, and can only live full lives, in the wild. We are calling for a move towards sustainable, locally appropriate solutions to end the suffering of wild animals used in tourism entertainment.

To protect wild animals, World Animal Protection is working alongside governments, tourist venues, communities and local people to develop and catalyse sustainable and economically viable solutions.

We are opening conversations to help achieve lasting change for wild animals – to move away from exploitation to venues with animal welfare and protection at their core. We are also raising awareness among tourists to ensure they make informed, ethical decisions and put animal welfare at the heart of their travel choices. We are encouraging them to view wild animals in their natural environment, or to only visit venues where the best interests of captive wild animals are being met.

Our aim is for national and local governments and the tourism industry to introduce policy measures that will ultimately phase out the wildlife entertainment industry and keep wild animals in the wild, where they belong.

100% of the venues visited with captive elephants, tigers, dolphins or civet cats, and 80% of those with captive wild primates did not meet even the basic needs of captive wild animals.



Introduction

Connecting with the natural environment is important to many of us when we travel – proximity to wildlife, outside of a zoo experience has been found to be important to tourists [1]. Viewing wild animals cultivates caring, pro-conservation behaviour [1]. Wildlife tourism, when properly managed, can be positive for the environment and wild animals: it can lead to and help fund the protection of natural areas, improve animal welfare and alleviate poverty. [2, 3]. Many tour operators keep these values at the heart of their business models.

Unfortunately, however, wildlife tourism can have a dark side. There are many tour operators and venues who, knowingly or unknowingly, exploit wildlife for profit in ways that lead to suffering, habitat destruction, and species decline. Venues may promote themselves as conservation driven and eco-friendly, but offer little to no conservation benefits, or actually cause damage, generating conflict between wildlife tourism and ecosystem protection [4, 5]. Many attractions offer superficial entertainment opportunities without aspiring to change tourist values or improve conservation efforts [6]. Tourists are often misled, paying for authentic animal learning opportunities, but being provided with an unnatural representation of the species' needs and behaviour [5, 7].

Many tourists actively seek out opportunities to experience wildlife close up and in person. They often share pictures with their friends of themselves with exotic, unusual or emblematic animals. In Indonesia, examples of sought after wildlife experiences and photo opportunities include swimming with captive dolphins, riding an elephant, or taking a selfie with an orangutan. The sharing of these types of images online unwittingly sends a message to hundreds, even thousands of people that this activity is acceptable.

For the unsuspecting tourist, what is being done to make these animals submissive or keep them available for personal contact happens behind the scenes, and is invisible to the people that pay for this experience.

It's important to note that many tourists are seeking out these opportunities for their interest in, respect for, and love of animals, and we believe most would choose not to engage in this type of activity if they were aware of the cruelty it causes.

Our research shows clearly that many operators and facilities are cruelly exploiting and injuring wildlife, to provide harmful holiday experiences for tourists. Indonesia has laws that aim to prevent cruelty to animals but these appear to be not sufficiently strong or are not appropriately enforced [8].

The Indonesian islands of Bali and Lombok are tropical paradises, attracting over five million tourists in 2017 [9]. Visiting wildlife entertainment venues is a popular activity, and several major animal attractions within Bali have been identified for wildlife tourism expansion. This report explores the current scope and conditions of wildlife exploited for entertainment within Bali and Lombok, Indonesia.

Image: Chained elephants with riding saddles at a tourist venue in Bali. The right hind leg of the foremost elephant has scarring that could be from a chain.

It's reasonable to assume that the findings of this report represent a fraction of the wildlife entertainment venues within Indonesia, and that many more attractions involving a wider variety of species and activities are currently being offered throughout the region.

The impact on animal welfare

Animal welfare is often viewed as how an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives. Animal welfare incorporates the physical and psychological well-being of the animal, as well as its ability to express natural behaviours.

Good welfare for animals exists when an animal's nutritional, environmental, health, behavioural and psychological needs are all being met [10]. This is a challenge for the keeping of pets and livestock but especially also for wild animals. Wild animals have adapted perfectly to their wild environment, and have evolved to survive and thrive in their natural habitat. In the case of most wild animals it is impossible to meet all of their welfare needs in captivity. Wild animals are, by definition, an undomesticated species. Unlike domesticated animals such as dogs or cats, wild animals have not undergone genetic changes in either appearance or behaviour which enables them to adapt readily to 'non-wild' captive conditions.

Even the most well-intentioned tourism venue operators will deprive an animal of one or all of its needs in the course of approaching, capturing, baiting, restraining, feeding, transporting, holding captive, using and/or disposing of these animals [11].

Unfortunately, it's often not feasible to release wild animals raised in captivity back into the wild. The resources required to implement best-possible captive solutions for those existing captive wild animals pose a huge challenge – particularly in parallel to the ongoing commercial exploitation of these animals for tourism entertainment.

Wild animals belong in the wild, as this is the only place they can lead full lives free from the suffering inherent with captivity.

Life in captivity

In captivity, wild animal welfare is strongly dictated by how closely their living conditions resemble their wild natural environment and by how well the venue's management can address welfare problems through best practice care and husbandry.

Venues keeping captive wild animals, including rescue centres, tourism entertainment venues and zoos, are responsible for ensuring the best interests of those captive wild animals are being met.

However, meeting the needs of captive wild animals, when they belong in the wild, is very challenging. In many of the venues visited, little to no attempt was made to replicate a natural environment, with many animals being kept in small concrete cages, behind bars or on chains. To begin to attempt to meet even the most basic needs of captive wildlife, the following essentials need to be implemented:

- The ability for the animals to move freely and without restraints, in an enriched environment.
- Their direct interaction with visitors should be limited or non-existent. Rides and handling for selfies must be stopped.
- The food and water provided to them should be fresh, in adequate amount and resemble their natural diet.
- Provision should be made allowing them to express their natural wild behaviour, such as roaming, foraging and interacting with each other, as they would in the wild.
- Access to veterinary care and best practice, welfare-maintaining, animal management procedures

Creating an environment for captive wild animals that strives to replicate their natural environment in the wild is challenging and expensive. Despite the available research there is still a lot that is unknown about the needs of many wild animals. Most wildlife entertainment venues prioritise factors such as visibility to the tourists, or minimising expenditure for keeping the animals, over the needs of the animals. For example, animals at such venues are often kept in unsuitable enclosures, with no option to hide from the crowds of visitors, causing distress and suffering.

In some venues captive wild animals do receive much improved nutrition and medical treatment. This can lead to the misconception that they are not suffering. But good animal welfare requires more than just physical health. Mental wellbeing, and the impact of the environment in which animals live, is equally important.

Ultimately, the needs of wild animals can only be fully met in the wild – the environment they naturally belong in and have evolved to thrive in.

Inadequate care for captive wild animals

At tourism entertainment venues, the welfare of captive wild animals depends on venue owners having the appropriate knowledge and awareness of wild animal needs, and commitment to investing in their wellbeing. Unfortunately, because wild animals are often seen as commodities by their owners, some may feel it is easier to replace them rather than investing in improvements to their welfare.

Captive wild animals kept in inadequate welfare conditions can develop psychological or neurological disorders as symptoms of these inadequate conditions. Some of these appear as stereotypies. Stereotypies are defined as repetitive movements without clearly established purpose or function [12]. In elephants, for example, stereotypies include head bobbing or weaving back and forth; tigers and other mammals may pace their enclosure repeatedly; primates may self-mutilate, biting themselves and pulling out chucks of hair. These behaviours often develop in response to increased stress from confinement or from being left in isolation, with no stimulation or chance to move freely [13]. Stereotypical behaviour has only been observed in captive animals – wild animals have not been shown to develop these [12], making captivity the direct cause of these abnormal behaviours.

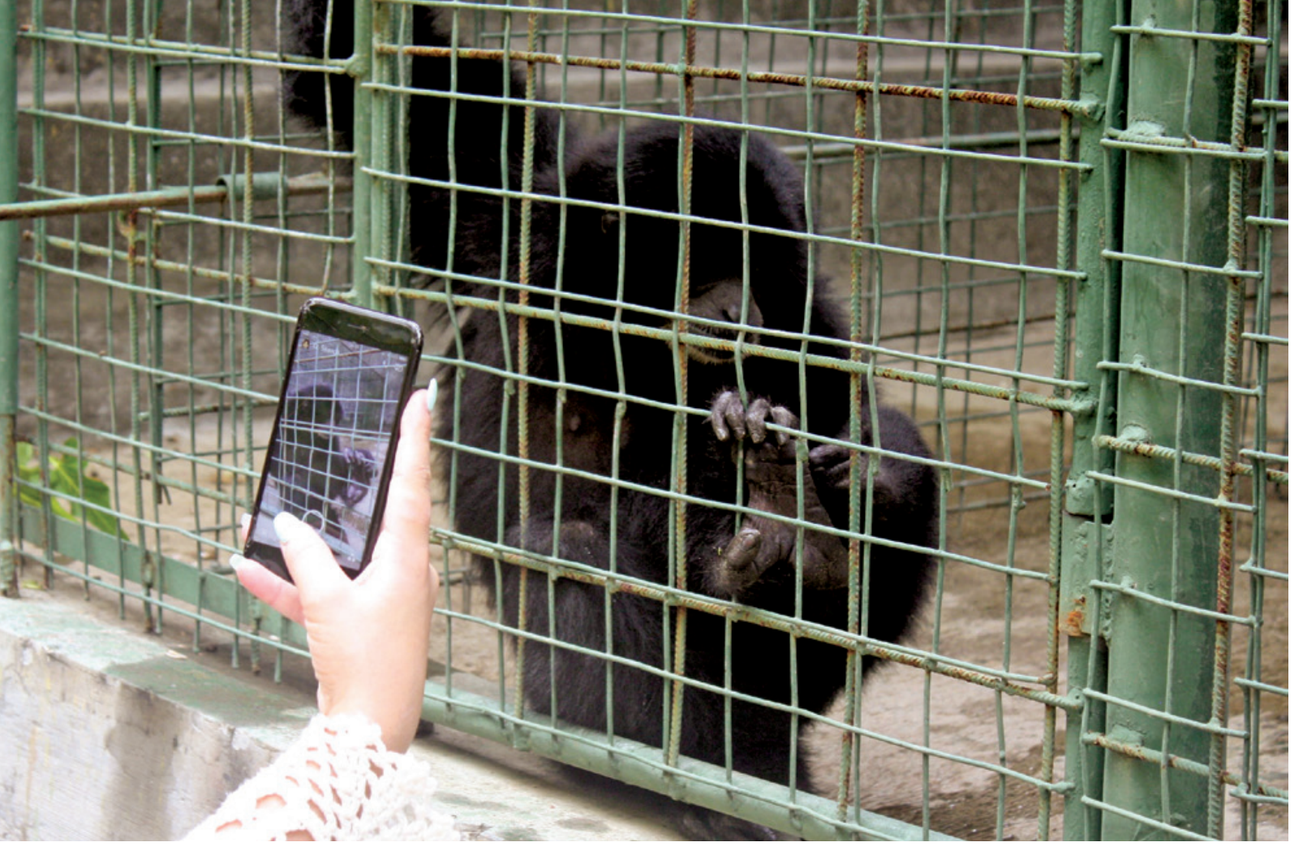


Image: A gibbon in a barren cage at a Bali tourist venue. It will spend its life in this cage, let out only to interact with tourists.

Captive wild animals can also develop disorders or injuries linked to malnutrition, harmful environments, neglect or harsh training methods. And those suffering in unacceptable living conditions are more likely to contract diseases, posing an infectious risk to tourists and people working with the animals [14]. Regular exposure to different people also puts the health of the animals at risk [15]. This is particularly a concern for non-professionals, such as visitors, interacting with animals.

Using captive wild animals for entertainment

Wild animals taken from the wild, or bred in captivity, for the tourism industry not only live in unacceptable captive conditions, they also endure cruel and intensive training.

From elephant rides and orangutans being used in holiday photos, to dolphins and tigers being forced to perform tricks for tourists, wild animals will suffer at every stage of their captive lives.

For instance, all captive wild elephants go through an intense and stressful training process to accept having people ride on their necks and backs. Elephants can suffer daily pain and discomfort from being saddled, overburdened with heavy passengers, constant interaction with people and from being tired and overworked. For more information on captive elephant tourism, World Animal Protection's report, 'Taken for a Ride' [16], comprehensively details our research into the conditions of elephants used in tourism venues in Asia.

In addition to elephants, other captive wild animals used in shows and other entertainments usually endure severe discomfort or injuries from being forced to carry out extremely repetitive and limited behaviour patterns, while often subjected to stressful and painful training.

There are also insufficient regulations in Indonesia, and elsewhere, protecting wild animals from exploitation. To maximise profits, many captive wild animals are forced to work long and stressful hours to entertain tourists, with little rest and recovery time between activities. Overworked animals are prone to illness and injury and may also become aggressive, often requiring rough handling by their keepers to make them work. When their work for the day is finally over, many are returned to poor cages and enclosures that often fail to meet many of their basic needs. If they become too aggressive to handle, many are disposed of, or locked away out of public sight after they can no longer serve their purpose as entertainers.

Much of this abuse takes place behind the scenes with visitors unaware of the negative impact their visits have on the animals. While the tourists leave with their photographs and happy memories of their experience, it's the wild animals who pay the true price.

Dolphins in entertainment

Dolphin facts

Indonesia is home to more than half of the world's dolphin species, with the rich seas and channels between islands making ideal habitats for these highly intelligent marine mammals. Around Bali, the most commonly seen dolphin species are the Indo-Pacific bottlenose (Tursiops aduncus) and spinner (Stenella longirostris) dolphins. Dolphins are highly social, living in large groups, or pods, and are known for their high intelligence and agility.

While there are many opportunities for tourists to view wild dolphins within Indonesia, including on Bali, there are a worrying number of entertainment venues, including travelling circuses, which cruelly exploit captive dolphins. Disturbingly, research has proven that many of the dolphins within Indonesian entertainment venues were illegally caught from the wild [17].

Captive dolphin entertainment directly threatens wild dolphin populations, in addition to subjecting individual animals to inhumane treatment for the rest of their lives.

Forced interactions

It is unacceptable to bring marine mammals into captivity for public display and entertainment purposes. At all points of a captive dolphin's life, from capture to imprisonment and forced participation in entertainment, the animal is subject to cruelty and suffering. Subjected to traumatic and often fatal handling and transportation, most dolphins are snatched from the wild to live out the rest of their lives in inhumane, unnatural conditions. Despite growing concern over the morality of keeping such intelligent animals in captivity, there are an increasing number of public display facilities globally, which allow paying tourists to watch dolphin shows and swim with captive dolphins.

Travelling circuses have been highlighted by organizations including the Jakarta Animal Aid Network (JAAN) and Ric O'Barry's Dolphin Project, as being particularly stressful for dolphins, with regular exposure to intense shows and extremely traumatic transportation between locations [18, 19]. Calls to ban traveling dolphin circuses have so far been unsuccessful. For swim with dolphin experiences, venues

Image left: Tourists interact with a dolphin in a sea pen. **Image top and bottom right:** Captive dolphins perform tricks for tourists in a hotel pool.

tout these as 'once-in-a-lifetime' opportunities, where visitors can get up close and personal with captive dolphins, in some cases justifying such interactions as 'Dolphin-Assisted Therapy' (DAT).

In these circumstances, as seen at some of the dolphin entertainment venues in Bali, touching or swimming with dolphins is used to motivate or reward a disabled person, particularly children. Dolphin venues which offer swim with dolphin packages often promote their activities as being beneficial to human health, mentally and physically, but research has concluded that studies by venues which promote DAT are flawed, with dubious validity [20–23]. Research suggests that DAT is no more effective than using domesticated animals, such as cats or dogs, or even animatronic dolphins [24] but with far greater costs to both humans, financially and in terms of health risks, as well as the considerable negative effects for dolphins .

Swim with dolphin packages, whether for DAT or other purposes, encourage touching, swimming, kissing and other interactions between captive dolphins and tourists. Such actions can cause stress and physical harm to the dolphins. Beaching, for example, where dolphins are commanded to fully remove themselves from the water and onto the side of the pool/tank, is unnatural in cetaceans and can cause physical problems. When out of the water and no longer buoyant, dolphins feel the full weight of their bodies, putting stress onto their internal organs and causing respiratory distress. The longer the dolphin is out of the water, the more chance there is of developing heat exhaustion and dehydration.

Towing – the pulling of tourists or the trainer through the water by holding the dolphin's fins – is equally unnatural, and the extra weight the dolphin is forced to carry may damage the fins. Dolphins are strictly controlled by trainers, having undergone rigorous, repetitive training to attempt to ensure they perform their tricks correctly. Operant conditioning, the most common training method, uses food to encourage the performance of a series of behaviours, or tricks. This means that, for some animals, food is only provided after successfully performing tricks. A state of hunger may be deliberately created to reinforce the fact that the trainer is in control of food provision. This training method destroys any remaining natural feeding and foraging urges.

As is the case with captive elephants who are forced to perform for tourism purposes, there have been numerous documented cases where captive cetaceans have finally rebelled against their trainers, resulting in injuries and fatalities [25]. Injuries to tourists are also not uncommon, and some venues take cruel steps to minimise this. As was observed at one venue in Bali during this study, dolphins have had their teeth filed down or removed entirely, to ensure that they are unable to inflict serious bites on swimmers. This in turn negates the argument by some swim with dolphin facilities that the dolphins enjoy their compulsory performances.

Capture and transportation

The disturbance, pursuit, and handling which marine mammals endure when captured from the wild are highly traumatic and violent. There are significant physical and psychological impacts on dolphins when captured, and evidence suggests that over the course of their lives, dolphins never become accustomed to the stress of being handled and transported. For bottlenose dolphins, the risk of dying increases six-fold during the first five days after a wild capture, and a similar increase in mortality is evident after each transport between venues – the dolphins never get used to such trauma and the stress increases their risk of death considerably [26, 27].

Within Bali, the common story given by staff at the dolphin venues visited was that the dolphins present were 'rescued' with some venues suggesting their dolphins were accidentally entangled and injured in fishing gear and for an unknown reason could not be returned to the wild, despite recovering their health. Other staff at the visited venues gave conflicting information, suggesting the dolphins were supplied by the Indonesian government and originated from a training facility in Central Java. Regardless of the true source of the dolphins, they were all kept in conditions which seriously compromise their physical and mental health.

Housing captive dolphins

Entertainment venues are incapable of simulating the natural habitats of dolphins and other cetaceans. When constructing housing for captive dolphins, satisfying the entertainment needs of the tourists while meeting the facility's budget, comes before meeting the welfare needs of the dolphins [25]. Captive dolphins frequently languish in smooth-sided concrete pools which have been designed to look attractive to tourists, but provide an inadequate amount of space, variation or environmental enrichment for the dolphins housed there. The designs of the pool suppress natural activity levels, social groupings, hunting behaviours, and acoustic perceptions. Pool water is often chemically treated and filtered for hygiene and cleaning purposes, often with high levels of chlorine which can cause serious skin and eye complications, including blindness for marine mammals. Smooth concrete walls usually surround these sound-sensitive animals and inhibit or discourage the natural use of their acoustic abilities.

Housing captive dolphins in sea pens, fenced-off portions of open seawater or lagoons, is thought to be preferable to tanks and pools, where natural seawater is present as opposed to chemically treated and/or chlorinated water. Sea pens, however, also present conditions which compromise the health of dolphins held within them. Pens may be close to pollution sources, and sources of acoustic pollution. Noise from boat traffic and harbours can create high levels of noise which may echo off the seabed and create an inescapable source of distress to dolphins, even potentially damaging hearing. Within tanks and sea pens, social partners are restricted to a handful of tank-mates, if any. If there is conflict or aggression between tank-mates, there is no chance of escape.

More detailed information on the suffering endured by marine mammals in captivity can be found in the World Animal Protection (formerly WSPA) and HSUS's report 'The Case Against Marine Mammals in Captivity'.

Image: Dolphins are made to 'beach' themselves as part of a show at one Bali dolphin venue. Being completely removed from water puts stress onto internal organs, causing distress.

Image: The tiny size and poor design of dolphin pools, such as at this Balinese venue, provide no opportunity to express natural behaviour.

Sea turtles in entertainment

Sea turtle facts

The waters of Indonesia are home to six out of seven of the world's sea turtle species; Green turtle (Chelonia mydas), hawksbill turtle (Eretmochelys imbricate), olive ridley (Lepidochelys olivacea), flatback sea turtle (Natator depressus), leatherback sea turtle (Dermochelys coriacea), and loggerhead sea turtle (Caretta caretta). The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species defines hawksbill turtles as critically endangered, with green turtles, olive ridleys, loggerheads and leatherbacks defined as endangered. All species of sea turtles are currently listen onthe Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) of Wild Flora and Fauna, Appendix 1, meaning the international trade of the species for commercial purpose is prohibited.

Image: Distressed captive sea turtles at a Balinese venue are removed from the water for tourist selfies. Turtles have been found to demonstrate antipredator and escape behaviours when in contact with tourists.

Captive sea turtle tourism

Although there are reputable facilities associated with NGOs dedicated to sea turtle conservation, there are a number of tourism venues which have little regard for either the welfare of the animals in their care, or the fate of the endangered wild populations. Despite their endangered status, some wildlife entertainment venues cash in on their visitors' desire to get close to these unique marine animals, offering opportunities for visitors to touch and pick up captive turtles.

In the wild, sea turtles occupy large ranges and are able to migrate over distances up to 1,400 miles, and dive to depths of over 500 meters. Sea turtles at tourism venues are often housed in small concrete/tiled pens or tanks, with little depth of water and no environmental enrichment. In some cases, hundreds of turtles are crowded into public facing areas, sometimes with the water drained out, so tourists can better see the turtles. Stranded on concrete and unable to move properly without water present, the turtles are powerless to avoid the noisy crowds of tourists who flock to see them.

Research has shown that the handling of captive sea turtles at wildlife attractions causes them stress, with turtles demonstrating antipredator and escape behaviours when in contact with tourists [28]. There have been documented cases of tourists dropping turtles, potentially injuring the turtle and damaging its protective shell. Other injuries and diseases, from fungal infections to skin lesions, have been documented at turtle tourism venues. Sea turtles are generally solitary creatures, rarely interacting with each other outside of mating; when forced together into large social groups, where turtles are unable to avoid each other, aggressive biting behaviour and even cannibalism have been documented [28].

Human health and environmental concerns

In addition to the appalling conditions the turtles are kept in at tourism venues, and the welfare challenges these conditions create, the public are also unknowingly putting themselves at risk when they visit these venues. Interacting with captive sea turtles may pose a serious health risk, as diseases harboured by the turtles which thrive in the unhygienic conditions of the pools can be passed to humans. Analysis of water samples at captive sea turtle venues have revealed the worrying presence of pathogens and bacteria including Salmonella [28, 29].

Diseases present at captive turtle facilities may also pose a risk to wild populations, as dirty water contaminated at venues and then returned to the sea may be a disease vector. The presence of money-making captive sea turtle venues, far from being beneficial to conservation, puts the already endangered wild sea turtles at further risk.

Elephants in entertainment

Within Indonesia, there are two sub species of Asian elephants – the critically endangered Sumatran elephant (*Elephas maximus sumatranus*) and the Borneo or pygmy elephant (*Elephas maximus borneensis*). As deforestation for development has increased on both the islands of Sumatra and Kalimantan, human-elephant conflict has increased. Habitat loss due to the conversion of forests for commercial use has led to increased raids by elephants on food crops, and the damaging of rubber, coconut and palm oil plantations. As humans have encroached on the elephants' habitat, elephants have been responsible for a growing number of deaths within villages. Angry at the destruction of their property, poaching has increased in an attempt to protect crops and livelihoods.

On Bali and Lombok, there are no wild elephant populations, so the elephants originate from elsewhere. In response to the growing problems of human-elephant conflict, the Indonesian government began a program of relocating wild elephants or taming them in Elephant Conservation Centres around Indonesia. The staff at several of the visited entertainment venues stated that their elephants originally came from Sumatra, some being transported from the Elephant Conservation Centres and into the tourism entertainment industry. Removing endangered elephants from the wild and shifting them into a commercial industry leading to lifelong suffering is a dangerous and worrisome situation. Our report 'Taken For a Ride' further details the devastating effects the sourcing of wild elephants for commercial purposes can have [16].

Tourism demands

Elephants are one of the most iconic animals in the world, and the appeal of interacting with captive elephants is understandable; they are charismatic megafauna with a wide public appeal. For safety reasons, visitors within most Western-style zoos are limited to observing elephants from a distance, but that is not the case within Indonesia and many other Asian countries. Tourism venues offer the opportunity for visitors to physically engage with and ride captive elephants – without background knowledge of the abusive training methods used to break the elephants' spirits, and the inadequate conditions they are often housed in.

The breaking and training process

All captive wild elephants will suffer a cruel and intensive training process, often called 'breaking-in' so they can be safely used in tourism entertainment. This procedure has been handed down over generations. There are some regional variations and not all are as extreme as depicted in some instances, but they all cause intense suffering to elephants.

Commonly, the process will involve severe restraint so that the elephant only moves when commanded by the mahout (carer), and thus accept a person riding on their neck. Severe pain is often inflicted to speed up the process and quickly establish dominance, even though it's recognised by experienced mahouts this can increase the elephant's aggression towards people.

Image: A bullhook lies near an elephant on a short chain. Bullhooks are used on sensitive areas of the body to control elephants.

Depending on the mahout and the individual elephant, this process can take between a few days and a week. Although a short period of time in comparison to an elephant's long life, this highly traumatic experience will stay with the elephant forever. Recent research links traumatic events like this with the development of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder in elephants [30].

Footage of these procedures carried out on newly captured elephants shows severe abuse and extreme stress and pain for the animal. Even if these disturbing reports are the exception and less extreme variations are applied by some venues to captive-bred elephants, the training process remains an intensely stressful and cruel event for wild-caught and captive born animals.

Some venues experiment with less intense training methods, introducing techniques of zoo animal and horse training to captive bred elephants. While these techniques may to a degree reduce the cruelty necessary to train elephants, they remain based on establishing dominance and continue to rely on fear of pain as the ultimate control measure.

Tourists who enjoy interacting with captive wild elephants, or watching them perform seemingly harmless acts such as painting, are not aware of the severe suffering that lies beneath.

Gentle giants?

Many tourists incorrectly presume that elephants are docile animals, a story which many elephant entertainment venues are keen to spread. These 'gentle giants', however, are one of the most dangerous wild animals to handle. The number of people severely injured by captive wild elephants is estimated to be the highest rate among captive wild animals used by people.

Within Bali and other parts of Indonesia, there are documented cases of people being injured and killed by captive elephants [31, 32]. In April 2017, the owner of a Balinese venue assessed during this study was killed by one of the camp's captive male elephants, which lashed out at the owner as he tried to feed it.

The 'musth' period, an annual phase of increased testosterone production in male elephants, causes the biggest issue in controlling captive wild elephants. During this period male elephants become unpredictable and often extremely aggressive. Even the most progressive elephant sanctuaries struggle with the management of male elephants during this period. They resort to chaining them in isolation during musth – which can last anything from three weeks to a few months.

Captive welfare challenges

Captive elephants in tourism venues across Asia, and globally, face severe welfare challenges. Typical conditions which negatively impact welfare include chaining and/or restricting movement; long working hours; bearing excessive weight loads; lack of competent veterinary care; poor environmental hygiene; unsuitable or inadequate amounts of food; exposure to large noisy crowds and electronic noise, frequent direct interaction with visitors, and lack of social interaction between elephants.

These challenges are documented in greater detail in the World Animal Protection report 'Taken for a Ride', which assessed the conditions present at a range of elephant entertainment venues across Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and parts of India.

The conditions documented in 'Taken for a Ride' were also found to be present in many of the venues assessed in Bali and Lombok in November 2017.

Other wild animals in entertainment

A wide range of other wild animals, particularly mammals, are exploited at tourism venues in Indonesia, and around the world.

Tigers in entertainment

Tigers are considered endangered by the IUCN (2011) with a declining population trend and are listed in Appendix I of CITES, restricting their international trade. Present at several wildlife attractions in Bali, captive tiger numbers are increasing, causing intense suffering for tigers, while maintaining demand and financial incentives to poach and trade wild tigers. In some venues, the tigers are forced to perform in daily shows, running, jumping and being made to swim to entertain large crowds of tourist, to the sound of blaring music and loudspeakers. More information on tigers used in entertainment can be found in World Animal Protection's reports 'Wildlife on a Tightrope' and 'Tiger Selfies Exposed' [30, 33]

Photo-prop wildlife

Wildlife selfies, where tourists, with the help of tour operators, capture and share images of themselves with wild animals, have become increasingly popular within wildlife tourism venues. During research for this report, a range of photo-prop animals were exploited at a number of venues. There to be used as props for selfies, captive wild photo-prop animals included young orangutans, binturongs, pythons, young lions and civets. For a price, members of the public can pose next to them, touch, kiss and feed them while having their photo taken, with no regard for the animals' comfort.

Nocturnal and crepuscular animals – those active at night, and at dawn or dusk – such as binturongs and civets, are manhandled in the bright sunshine, a far cry from their wild lives, which would see them sleeping for most of the day.

Young orangutans were observed in Bali, clinging to each other in the absence of their mother as they were shampooed by their keeper, in preparation for their day-long photo-prop shift. Smelling fresh and wearing diapers to make sure the tourists don't get soiled, the orangutans were prodded and poked into position, and roughly chastised when they didn't behave as expected, all so tourists can take home a photo of their experience. After their long shift, the two orangutans were returned to their bleak concrete and metal cage for the night, before their work started again in the morning.

Using a captive wild animal as a photo prop in a selfie can inflict stress and suffering on the animal, removing their choice of whether to interact or not, and forcing them into unnatural situations [34]. Behind the scenes, these animals may be beaten into submission, taken from their mothers as babies and secretly kept in filthy, cramped conditions or repeatedly baited with food that can have a long term negative impact on their biology and behaviour [16, 35–37].

All too often, to the unsuspecting tourist, the cruelty that makes these animals submissive and available is entirely invisible. More information on the cruelty behind wildlife selfies can be found in the World Animal Protection report 'A close up on cruelty: The harmful impact of wildlife selfies in the Amazon' [38].

Image: A tourist takes a photo of a child posing with a binturong at a Balinese tourist venue.

‘Kopi Luwak’: The impact of cruel coffee

Civet ‘cats’ are being poached from the wild to supply the demand for the world’s most expensive coffee. Known in Indonesia as Kopi Luwak, the civet coffee which these small, nocturnal animals help to produce has become a luxury product, much sought after by coffee lovers, who are likely unaware of the cruelty involved in its production. Our comprehensive paper, ‘Animal welfare implications of civet coffee on Bali’, and report ‘The true cost of the world’s most expensive coffee’, fully detail the suffering endured by these animals for the sake of a cup of coffee [39, 40].

Origins

According to Balinese coffee plantation owners, the origins of civet coffee can be traced to colonial times. Locals working on Dutch owned plantations were forbidden to use the coffee beans grown there, but found an innovative way to bypass the restrictions. Workers noticed that wild Asian palm civets – known as luwak in Indonesia - would eat the coffee cherries, and produce faeces containing undigested, fermented coffee beans. After cleaning and roasting, the beans produced a distinctive taste thought by some to be superior to the standard beans. Some producers still offer genuine wild civet coffee, collected from civets roaming the coffee plantations. This wild civet coffee benefits civets by protecting them from being hunted, and is generally acknowledged as producing higher quality coffee due to civets being able to pick the best coffee cherries, and in turn benefits the company and the community. However, as demand for civet coffee increased and increasingly included tourist seeking an attention getting souvenir, the industry is increasingly relying on capturing civets in the wild and keeping them in captivity.

Current situation

Civet ‘cats’ are cruelly poached from the wild, and forced to live in inhumane conditions at civet coffee venues across Bali and other parts of Indonesia. These gentle mammals are often injured during capture in traps and snares, and experience extreme stress when exposed to human handling. Their captive lives are as different to their wild ones as is possible, being housed in cramped cages with little or no environmental enrichment, and close to tourists during the daytime when these shy, nocturnal mammals would normally be sleeping.

Image: A captive civet cat at a Kopi Luwak coffee garden in Bali. Civets are poached from the wild and forced to live in inhumane conditions at both coffee tourism and production venues.

Scope and methodology

Study scope

This study, conducted during November 2017, assesses the scale of the captive wildlife tourism industry across Bali, Lombok and Gili Trawangan, Indonesia. It provides clarity about the conditions the captive wildlife face in the industry by assessing aspects of their welfare at each venue. This research identifies broader trends in the captive wildlife tourism industry in one of Indonesia’s primary tourism destinations. The study focused on captive wildlife in venues accessible to tourists. This was due to the severity of suffering at such venues, especially those including wildlife entertainment. It does not suggest that wildlife in other captive situations do not suffer or do not require attention.

Within the study area, the aim was to identify and visit as close as possible to 100% of the existing captive wildlife tourism venues. These included elephant riding camps, zoos and small menageries, dolphinaria, turtle hatcheries, and civet coffee venues. The venues were identified through a review of internet sources, guidebooks, interviews with local experts and by physical, on-the-ground scouting for venues in tourist areas likely to have wildlife attractions.

Table 1 provides names of the venues assessed which offer wildlife entertainment activities and/or physical interactions, in addition to the activities provided at them, as publicly advertised and/or observed by our research team. We have not published individual venue scores; we acknowledge that practices may change at venues and we would like to avoid misrepresenting venues in this report once they have implemented improvements. All venues were visited by the research team in person at least once, sometimes repeatedly, to document the situation and ensure an objective assessment not reliant on hear-say or anecdotal evidence.

Table 1. Venues assessed during this study which offered wildlife entertainment activities and/or physical interactions*

Wildlife Entertainment Venue	Elephant shows	Elephant riding	Elephant touching & selfies	Elephant bathing/ washing	Orangutan touching & selfies	Dolphin show/trick performance	Dolphin touching & selfies	Swimming with dolphins	Sea turtle touching & selfies	Other species touching & selfies	Tiger shows	Tiger feeding	Other species shows
Multispecies Venues													
Bakas Elephant Park		●	●	●	●					●			
Bali Elephant Camp (True Bali Experience)		●	●										
Bali Fantasi Benoa Bay (Turtle Island)									●	●			
Bali Safari & Marine Park	●	●	●		●					●	●	●	●
Bali Safari Park & Lodge (aka Mason Elephant Safari Park & Lodge)	●	●	●	●									
Bali Zoo		●	●	●	●					●		●	●
Lombok Elephant Park	●	●	●		●					●			
Dolphin Venues													
Dolphin Lodge Bali						●	●	●		●			
Melka Hotel (Dolphin venue)						●	●	●					
Wake Dolphins						●	●	●					

Key: ● – Activity is present

Assessment tools

For each venue a range of information was collected, which varied between species. Elephant information, for example, included: the number and genders of elephants; the way they were kept day and night; stereotypic occurrences; the daily routines; interaction with keepers, and activities the elephants were used for, and much more. For marine mammals, this also included: pool dimensions; water quality monitoring; show content, and visitor management. The data was collected mostly through direct observation in combination with interviews with staff on site.

Photographs and occasionally videos were taken to document the findings. At each venue, a rapid welfare conditions assessment was completed, using a score sheet approach. This score sheet covered nine categories with a significant direct impact on the captive animals' welfare. The researcher scored each venue along a 5-point scale from 0–4 for each of those categories. The total score for each venue was converted into a single final score on a scale from 1 (worst) to 10 (best possible captive conditions). Calculating the final scores required rounding of the individual scores. Scores of 0.0–0.4 were rounded down, while scores of 0.5–0.9 were rounded up to the next digit.

This rapid welfare conditions assessment was created to allow for the large scope of this study; it is not an attempt to be fully comprehensive. It does not provide a direct measurement of an individual captive animal's welfare. It evaluates the conditions that affect welfare and that the animals would face on a daily basis.

It must also be stressed that any captive situation for wild animals poses a compromise to its welfare, no matter how well intended or designed it may be. The top scores in this assessments methodology are calibrated to represent best possible captive conditions and do not suggest that by providing such conditions it justifies keeping wild animals in captivity.

The study identifies key areas of welfare concern and in previous published studies this methodology has proven to give a good indication of the current welfare conditions.

On the following page, Table 2 provides a description of the most common conditions at the various venues according to their scores. Please note: exceptions to those descriptions did occur and the table only describes the most likely scenario for each score category – as evidenced through the assessment visits.

Image: A juvenile orangutan – previously used for tourist selfies – in a barren, small cage.

Table 2: Description of the typical conditions for animals at venues with low, medium and high scores as per this study's welfare condition assessment.

	Freedom of movement	Social interaction	Hygiene	Nutrition	Environment	Tourist interaction	Animal management
Scores 1-5 (Severely inadequate conditions)	Across all assessed species, mobility is severely restricted at venues with these scores. For example, elephants are kept on short chains under 3m long, on concrete and are only allowed to move during tourism activities, or morning/evening routines; dolphins are usually housed in small swimming pools or sea-pens, with a water surface less than 100sqm per animal. Across all assessed species, the size and design of the habitat prohibits natural behaviour.	For social animals, interaction is very limited and animals are unable to form more complex relationships. Animals may be chained next to, or put into enclosures with incompatible animals, contributing to higher stress levels. Enclosures, or pools may be either overcrowded or isolate social animals. Solitary animals may be housed with others and be unable to avoid contact, increasing stress.	On land, old faeces may accumulate for days within enclosures. Limited drainage creates a urine smell or wet ground. Garbage or dung piles may be located within or near the animals' habitat. For species which require bathing, such as elephants, access to water is limited and controlled by keepers. For marine mammals, the water may be visibly dirty or show evidence of pollution, with little to no water filtration, or temperature control. Water quality is unclear or irregularly monitored, and potentially harmful levels of chemicals such as chlorine are present.	The lowest-ranking venues usually provide sufficient amounts of food, however, the quality of the food is inadequate and of limited variety, affecting nutritional levels. Furthermore, the provided food often bears the risk of being contaminated with insecticides or pesticides. At venues of these levels, carnivores such as tigers have little or no access to full carcasses. Dolphins may be fed frozen, or not fresh fish. Food may be withheld in order to encourage compliance during training and shows. For non-marine wildlife, access to water sources may be missing or irregularly provided.	Environments are usually urban, as many of these venues require easy access for larger numbers of tourists. Consequently, there is often noise pollution through traffic and loud-speakers. Across the assessed species, shows are noisy, exposing animals to loud music from speakers. For dolphins, the water habitat may have poor ventilation and insufficient lighting, or offer the animals no chance to avoid direct sunlight.	The lowest-ranking venues offer intensive direct physical interaction between tourists and captive wildlife. For elephants, tourists mainly visit these venues for saddled riding or watching elephant shows. Feeding of captive wildlife is common, as are taking selfies with animals. Venues with high numbers of tourists have queues of people waiting for the activities. For dolphins, tourists visit these venues to swim with dolphins and/or see shows. They actively interact with dolphins within the water, engaging in touching, kissing and being towed through the water holding the dorsal fin. There may also be separate shows available, where visitors can see a broader range of tricks performed.	The focus of these venues is usually on quantity of visitors and less on welfare of animals. Venues may be open to the public for 8 hours or more. Veterinary care may be lacking or carried out by animal keepers rather than qualified veterinary professionals. There may be little to no restrictions on the number of tourists able to interact with animals at any one time. There may be minimal or no briefing to tourists on how to behave when directly interacting with the animals.
Scores 6-8 (Adequate conditions)	Across all assessed species, mobility is less restricted at venues with these scores. For example, elephants are kept on longer chains, and during the day, the offered activities may allow for some sort of freedom to move independently. For marine mammals, water surface area and depth increases, and the design of the habitat will be more structured with varying depths, textures and offer more opportunity for exploration.	In medium-ranking venues, social animals are allowed slightly more social interaction. Limited socialisation is permitted, although this commonly will not allow for the creation of social groups or expression of more complex behaviours. Enclosures, or pools will be less crowded and social animals are not isolated. Solitary animals may be grouped with a small number of compatible animals, but have the option to avoid other animals at times.	Standing grounds are usually clean and dry, with faeces being removed daily. For species which require bathing, animals have increased access to a river for daily bathing, although they are still under keeper control. For marine mammals, water is visibly clean and of an adequate temperature, but monitoring of water quality may still be unclear or irregular. Attempts are made to regulate chemical levels.	Middle-ranking venues provide a more varied, higher quality appropriate diet to animals, which is an improvement to the monotonous diet in lowest-ranking venues, but still bears risks of pesticide contamination and insufficient variation. Food may also not be available at all times throughout the day. For non-marine wildlife, clean water access is usually reliably provided once or twice per day.	Environments and habitats are more natural in appearance and may be more rural. These venues usually depend less on walk-in visitors and are able to choose more remote locations, providing a more natural environment than the lower ranking venues. At times noise pollution due to larger visitor groups may occur.	The middle-ranking venues reduce the direct physical interaction between tourists and captive wildlife. For elephants, venues may offer bareback riding, which is often less intensive than saddled rides but which still requires full control of the elephant due to the close contact with the visitor. Across a range of assessed species, including dolphins, feeding, bathing and/or selfie activities are offered at set times, rather than when guests arrive. Shows are not usually performed at middle-ranking venues. Animals may be 'rotated' out of interactions, taking turns to reduce their interaction time with tourists.	Venues are open for between 6-8 hours. Middle-ranking venues usually employ better qualified keepers. Venue management will call for external vets to treat sick animals or some of the larger venues have their own vet staff on site. There are usually restrictions on the number of tourists able to interact with animals at any one time. There is usually a briefing on how to behave around when interacting with the animals. Still the focus for managing their animals is primarily on ensuring smooth operation of the business and only secondarily dictated by what is good for animals.
Scores 9-10 (Best possible captive conditions)	At the highest-ranking venues, mobility is the least restricted. Species such as elephants are usually not chained at all during the day, and are able to move around freely on their own terms – under supervision by mahouts who interfere if required. Other species, including marine mammals, have the largest enclosures which allow more space for exercise and to express a wider range of natural behaviours.	The highest-ranking venues allow social animals to interact freely in groups and form more complex social relationships. The compatibility of animals is considered when making housing decisions. Higher-ranking venues may restrict captive-breeding to prevent a further increase of the captive population. Solitary animals are kept solitary.	Habitats are clean and a high standard of hygiene is met. For species which require bathing, animals have free access to a range of bathing environments and are able to bathe and play where they choose. Marine mammals will live in i) clean water with a fully functioning filtration system and monitoring pH, salinity, chlorine and temperature or ii) have access to a natural sea environment away from sources of noise and chemical pollution.	Captive wildlife at the highest-ranking venues usually receive a mixture of a varied diet with cultured ingredients of higher quality, and, where species-applicable, complemented with access to natural browse for foraging during the day and at night. Cultured ingredients may be washed before feeding to minimise pesticide-caused problems. Animals have constant access to clean drinking water.	Environments are mostly entirely in the natural environment; some venues are remote, away from loud tourist crowds. There is very little or no noise pollution present.	At the highest-ranking venues, no direct interaction between visitors and captive wildlife is offered. Visitors observe animals behaving as naturally as possible in a captive environment. The lack of direct interaction ensures these activities are safer for visitors and least stressful for the captive animals. Education of visitors is usually taken very seriously and provided through dedicated and knowledgeable staff.	Animal management at these venues prioritises the welfare of the animals over their control and visitor numbers. Due to no direct interaction with tourists less handling and control over animals is needed, allowing for a less stressful environment. Animal keepers are trained to high standards and work in conjunction with on-site veterinary staff.

Results

Image: An elephant performs during a show at a tourism venue on Bali. Captive elephants are forced to endure cruel and intensive training to make them perform, and to interact with people.

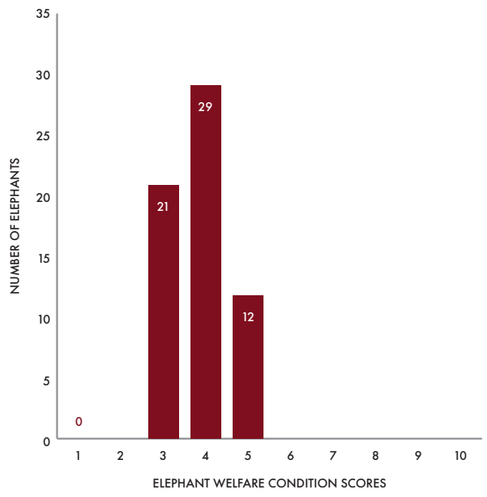
Elephants

In total 100 elephants were kept at six identified and assessed venues, and 62 of these were directly observed. Elephant rides were offered at 100% of the venues housing elephants. 100% of those sites used wooden or steel saddles. There were no venues which solely offered bareback rides, which are often less physically demanding for the elephants.

Elephant circus shows could be seen at 50% of venues, often several times a day. These venues always offered saddled elephant rides as well. 100% of venues offered opportunities to take selfies with the elephants and feed them, while 50% of venues offered elephant bathing and washing experiences.

The welfare conditions for captive elephants across the assessed Indonesian islands is deeply concerning (Figure 1). Our research shows that 100% of the elephants are kept in severely inadequate conditions, represented by welfare scores of 5 or lower on a scale from 1 (worst) to 10 (best).

Figure 1. Welfare conditions for elephants at venues in Bali and Lombok, as found by this study. 1 is the lowest score and 10 is highest.



Our research shows that over 51% of elephants observed had no possibility of tactile interaction with other elephants. They could see and/or hear other elephants, but were chained or housed out of physical reach.

Elephants are highly socially-developed animals, and in the wild would arrange themselves into complex social structures. Isolating individuals from tactile contact can profoundly impact the welfare of captive wild elephants.

In this study we registered nearly 15% of elephants displaying stereotypies that were not in any activity during the assessment visits. We excluded elephants that were in activities, such as riding, as usually such stereotypic behaviours are supressed during activities.

We documented a clear correlation between the ratio of elephants expressing stereotypies and the welfare scores for the venue in which the elephants were kept. In the venue with a score of 3, representing the worst conditions identified in this study, over 19% of elephants that were not busy with a tourist activity expressed stereotypies. In the two venues with a score of 5 – representing the best but still severely inadequate conditions identified in this study – we still documented 8% of elephants with stereotypies.

Image: A young tiger is bottle-fed by a trainer during a show at a popular wildlife entertainment venue in Bali. During the show, other tigers were made to perform various activities to retrieve food. Common training methods may include withholding food prior to shows to make the tigers more obedient.

Tigers

15 tigers were observed within two venues on Bali, out of an estimated total of 18 tigers. Tigers were used within shows at half of the venues.

All of the captive tigers are kept in severely inadequate conditions, represented by welfare scores of 5 or lower on a scale from 1 (worst) to 10 (best) (see Figure 2).

One of the most concerning aspects of the tigers' conditions is the housing and space available for them. While a number of tigers were observed in medium-sized enclosures of between 131-400sqm, nearly 27% of tigers were housed in cages between 6-20sqm. A common cause for stereotypies can be lack of space, which may not allow the animal to carry out actions it would like to do at a specific time, leading to stress. Typical stereotypic behaviour in tigers include weaving and pacing, repeatedly walking the boundary of the cage or enclosure. 75% of the tigers housed in cages under 20sqm were observed exhibiting stereotypies, particularly pacing. In addition to lack of space is the concern of overcrowding – at one venue, all the tigers were sharing housing classed as overcrowded.

In the two assessed venues, the overall hygiene of the tigers' living areas was good, demonstrating clean, dry ground, without old faeces or garbage present. However, nine out of the 15 observed tigers (60%) were housed in cages with concrete floors, which have been found to cause footpad abrasions in big cats [41, 42]. Unnatural enclosure substrates, such as concrete, can cause stereotypic behaviour, as the animal's ability to interact with natural substrates, such as dirt or grass, is removed.

Figure 2. Welfare conditions for tigers at venues in Bali and Lombok, as found by this study. 1 is the lowest score and 10 is highest.

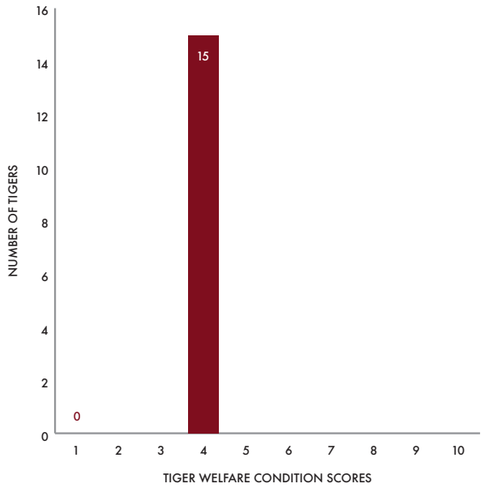


Image: A dolphin captive in a sea pen interacts with tourists. Sea pens are often situated near harbours where noise pollution from boat traffic create an inescapable source of distress for dolphins.

Dolphins

13 dolphins were observed within three venues on Bali, out of an estimated total of 18 dolphins. Dolphins were used within non-interactive shows at one venue, however, all dolphins at all venues were use intensively for swim with dolphin interactions and trick performances.

All of the captive dolphins observed are kept in severely inadequate conditions. Particularly the insufficient size and poor design of the enclosures at all venues contribute to the inadequate conditions.

One pool which housed four bottlenose dolphins, for example, was estimated to measure a tiny 10 x 20 meters wide, and just three meters deep. Another housed five dolphins in two roughly circular swimming pools, with an estimated surface area of less than 80 square meters each, and a depth of four meters. The third venue housed nine captive dolphins within small sea pens a few kilometres from the shore, with each pen holding two to three individuals. The pens have an estimated surface area of approximately 300sqm, and depth varying between 8-10 meters, depending on the distance from shore. Some staff at this venue claimed that the pens are regularly opened so they dolphins can swim at night and return for food, then are locked in during the day – the staff, however, could not agree on how often the dolphins were 'set free', with answers varying between every night, every week, and never. None of the venues provided pools or pens of an adequate size or design, which would allow the dolphins to express more natural behaviour and increased freedom of movement.

Water quality and health

The water quality at the venues is deeply concerning. In all venues where dolphins are housed in small swimming pools, chemicals such as chlorine are added to the water in an attempt to neutralise bacteria from the dolphins' waste. The presence of such chemicals can cause serious skin and eye complications, including blindness for marine mammals. The sea pen location of one venue is close to a busy harbour, creating chemical and acoustic pollution which the dolphins are unable to escape.

Five of the dolphins present across the assessed venues were observed to have signs of wounds, injury or disease, including potential blindness. A male dolphin at one venue has an injury to his eye and appeared unable to see well from it. When asked about this injury, staff reported that it was from when he was young. Given the chlorination of the water, it is more likely that the levels of chemicals added to the water have affected the dolphin's vision.

Activities offered

Accessed by boat, one popular venue assessed during this study attracts several hundred visitors daily, according to staff. Here dolphins are made to swim and interact with tourists in the water in return for food, even towing heavy visitors through the water using their dorsal fins. Forced to perform tricks for food, they jump, retrieve hoops and tail-walk – rising out of the water and moving backwards – for groups of tourists in the water with them. In some pens, males and females are housed together and staff reported their hope that the pairs will breed.

At another assessed venue, loud, electronic dance music blares out of speakers, causing stress and potentially damaging the sensitive hearing of the dolphins. Here, they are made to beach themselves at the side of the small pool, where the waiting tourists are then given a 'kiss'. Kept separately, three additional male dolphins are forced to interact with tourists and hotel guests in the swim-with-dolphins packages, in a similarly sized swimming pool.

The third dolphin entertainment venue assessed during this study is one which is no stranger to controversy, having been the subject of various complaints from concerned members of the public and NGOs. Due to the scrutiny, the beachfront venue has disallowed outside photography or videos in an effort to control access to the four bottlenose dolphins currently held there. Access to the dolphins can only be gained by buying one of the packages.

Kept in a chlorinated swimming pool measuring an estimated ten meters by 20 meters wide, and three meters deep, two male and two female dolphins are housed a stone's throw away from the sea they should be swimming freely in. The nine year old females are the two current dolphins fully trained for public interactions. At the time of visiting, the two younger males were still in training, according to staff. For US$85, tourists can get into the water with the dolphins, touch, hug, kiss, feed and be 'massaged' by them, while the in-house photographer takes pictures which are able to be purchased.

Disturbingly, the teeth of the two females, and potentially the younger males, had been filed down to flat stumps and a few appeared to be entirely missing. When this was queried with the trainers running the show, it was claimed that the dolphins didn't grow teeth because they were raised in a pool. This is impossible, and the far more likely reason is painfully filing down the teeth to stop the dolphins biting trainers and tourists.

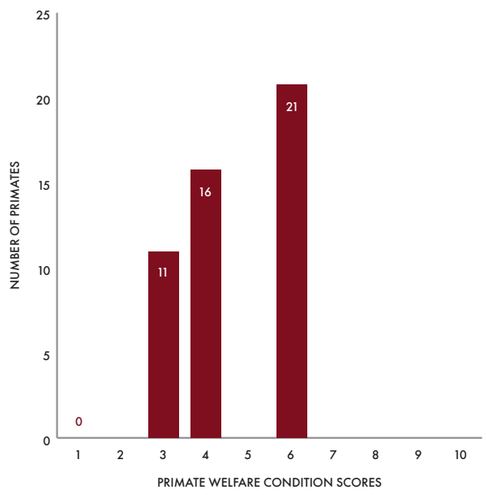
Image: The two pictured baby orangutans were used as photo-props at a multi-species wildlife tourism venue. After being washed to smell pleasant to guests, the siblings would spend up to six hours per day being handled and interacting with tourists.

Primates

48 primates were observed within five venues on Bali and Lombok, including 13 observed orangutans. Orangutans were kept at four out of five venues with primates. A number of species of gibbons and siamangs were kept at three out of five venues, two venues housed langurs, two venues housed macaques and two venues housed other primates, such as proboscis monkeys and slow loris.

Four out of five of the assessed venues were found to have severely inadequate conditions, represented by welfare scores of 5 or lower on a scale from 1 (worst) to 10 (best). One venue was found to have a medium welfare rating of 6 out of 10 (Figure 3). This was still lacking but offered the primates increased freedom of movement, more opportunities for social interaction, and more access to environmental enrichment, to increase natural behaviour.

Figure 3. Welfare conditions for primates at venues in Bali and Lombok, as found by this study. 1 is the lowest score and 10 is highest.



Concrete and other non-natural substances formed the basis of enclosures at 60% of the assessed venues, with only two venues attempting to replicate a more natural environment by using grass and dirt for substrate. Similarly, enclosures at 60% of venues only had the most minimal of structural environmental enrichment – sometimes a tree branch or bamboo pole – which the primates could use to express more natural behaviour.

At several venues, the lack of structural enrichment meant that a large proportion of their enclosure was 'dead-space', with no way for the animals to access the full height of the enclosure, severely restricting their space.

Activities offered

All venues with orangutans offered selfies and photo opportunities using the orangutans as photo-props. Of the venues assessed, 100% offered a combination of primate entertainment activities, such as shows (1 out of 5 venues), physical contact and selfie opportunities (4 out of 5 venues) and/or hand feeding (2 out of 5 venues).

Turtles

On a positive note, three out of four venues housing captive sea turtles within the study area were engaged in non-exploitative activities, including rescue and rehabilitation of injured turtles; gathering of eggs from vulnerable beaches, hatching and release back into the wild. These venues were the highest scoring of all assessed venues during the study, scoring between 7 and 9 points out of 10.

The sole assessed turtle venue engaged in entertainment activities scored two out of 10 for both turtle conditions and the conditions of the small mammals, including civets and primates, also housed there.

With one of the worst scores of the study, the venue kept 16 adult sea turtles – predominantly a mix of green sea turtles and olive ridley species – in two small enclosures one of which was filled with seawater, the other was dry due to the tide being out. In these enclosures, tourists could touch, interact and take selfies with the captive turtles. In the enclosure with younger juvenile turtles, tourists were able to pick individuals up by their shells, holding them out of the water. The turtles held in the air showed signs of distress, moving their flippers in an attempt to escape those holding them.

Staff stated that between 200-500 tourists visited daily to see these captive sea turtles, depending on the season, a truly shocking frequency of handling by inexperienced tourists.

Image: An adult sea turtle in an interaction area is handled by multiple people as they pose for photographs.

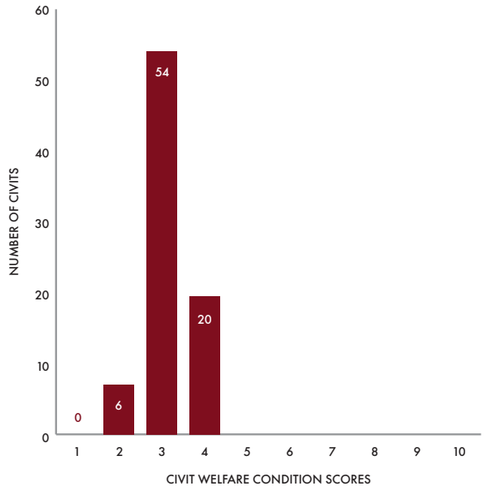
Image: Civets kept at Kopi Luwak coffee venues throughout Bali were found to be kept in severely inadequate conditions. In a number of cases, individuals and pairs of civets were housed in small wire cages, with barely enough room to turn around in.

Civets

80 civet cats were observed within 14 venues on Bali, 13 of which were 'Kopi Luwak' venues selling coffee produced using beans which have passed through the civets' digestive tracts. Across Bali we estimate that the total number of 'Kopi Luwak' venues has increased to between 30-40 venues. One venue housing civets was not concerned with producing coffee, but was primarily a sea turtle entertainment venue with a small menagerie of wild animals kept in extremely poor conditions.

100% of the captive civet cats at all venues were kept in severely inadequate conditions, represented by welfare scores of 5 or lower on a scale from 1 (worst) to 10 (best). The assessed venues which housed civets scored between 2 and 4 (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Welfare conditions for civets at venues in Bali and Lombok, as found by this study. 1 is the lowest score and 10 is highest.



Although not directly measured for this species, observed stereotypies including pacing and self-mutilation through tail biting were observed at several venues housing civets. Typically, these were associated with venues with the poorest enclosures, offering the smallest amount of space and/or lacking environmental enrichment, such as tree trunks or branches, which would form part of the civets' natural habitat.

The lowest scoring venue confined civets in tiny pet cages with an estimated floorspace of 0.5sqm. These cages offered no place to shelter from the bright sunlight which they would naturally avoid, and no place to hide from the human keepers or visitors. The cages contained no food or water during the day. At the majority of civet coffee venues, the provision of food and water was lacking, with animals being fed an extremely limited variety of product – in several cases only coffee beans and papaya – and with a water source not present at the times of assessments.

Two thirds of the venues housing civets scored a decent three out of four points for entertainment intensity due to the lack of physical interaction between the civets and tourists due to bite risk. However, the poor husbandry conditions faced by the civets at all venues negate this finding.

Previous research assessing the welfare of captive civets within Bali found the number of civets observed at each ranged from 1-6, with 48 civets being observed across 16 venues [39]. During this study, fewer venues were assessed (14 venues with civets, 13 of which were civet coffee gardens), and the number of civets observed at each venue ranged from 2-15. The total number of civets observed increased by over 66%, to 80 individuals. When assessing the age of all 26 of the venues observed during this study, nine of the 26 venues were found to be established less than five years ago. Of the nine venues under five years old, 78% were civet coffee venues. The increase in both the percentage of new civet coffee businesses, and the numbers of civets within each coffee venue, are worrying concerns.

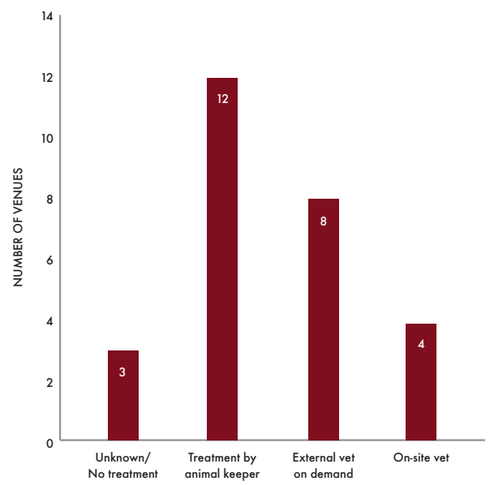
Additional general findings – all venues

Access to veterinary care was found to be worryingly lacking. Only 15% of venues (4 out of 26) had one or more vets on site permanently, while 31% of venues (8 out of 26) called in an external vet when the need arose. Almost half of the venues – 46% (12 out of 26) – relied upon animal keepers to administer any medical treatments, rather than qualified veterinarians. At 12% of venues (3 out of 26, the animals had no access to veterinary treatment, or the treatment protocol was unknown to staff (Figure 5).

66% of the venues assessed were open for eight hours or more, leaving animals on show and exposed to contact with tourists for the majority of daylight hours, even for nocturnal species. Over a quarter of venues were found to have daily visitor numbers between 201-500, often exposing animals to large crowds of noisy visitors from which they are unable to remove themselves.

Education on the importance of protecting wild animals was extremely rare, with only one venue – the Turtle Education and Conservation Centre in Bali – offering commendable 'comprehensive education' at its venue, including a dedicated classroom in which visiting school groups can learn about sea turtle conservation.

Figure 5. Captive wildlife access to veterinary care, as found by this study.



Conclusions

Image: An elephant with a saddle carries two tourists and a mahout on an elephant ride around a venue in Bali.

The findings from this research paint a bleak picture of the lives of the captive wild animals used for entertainment within Bali, Lombok and Gili Trawangan islands. While previous research in other regions has highlighted non-exploitative venues with good welfare standards, which meet many of the physical and behavioural needs of captive animals, the same cannot be said for this study area. 96% of the venues assessed fell into the lowest level of welfare condition scores, with severely inadequate conditions. Only one venue scored marginally better in terms of conditions for its captive primates, scoring 6 out of 10 points, but these were still inadequate and fall short of meeting many of the needs of captive wild animals.

The conditions at the wildlife entertainment venues within the study area are deeply concerning, with the welfare of the captive animals being severely compromised. This is in part due to the activities they are forced to engage in. For example, while elephant entertainment venues in other regions may be diversifying to include less intensive activities, within Bali and Lombok, all venues offer elephant riding. The associated conditions and physical effects of elephant riding have been shown to impact the welfare of the elephants, yet even accredited zoos promote elephant rides to their visitors. Similarly, the forced interactions between orangutans and tourists at assessed venues are associated with poor welfare, health risks for both animal and tourist, as well as highly questionable educational messaging.

The welfare of individual animals is severely affected by captivity in wildlife entertainment venues. Additionally, the use of captive wild animals in entertainment has a detrimental effect on wild populations, raising conservation concerns.

Our research shows that each of us has a role to play in protecting captive wildlife from the cruel conditions that come with being used to entertain tourists. World Animal Protection is working with governments, communities, organizations and people around the world to find practical ways, and sustainable evidence-backed solutions, to prevent animal suffering.

To protect wild animals used for entertainment tourism, we must work together with local influencers, people and partners, to open conversations to make lasting change for animals, and for people. We can help to build understanding about how we can all play our part to protect wild animals – to help keep them in the wild, where they belong.

Travellers should stay away from any irresponsible entertainment activities involving wild animals. If you can ride, hug, swim with or have a selfie with a wild animal, please don't and don't visit venues offering these activities.

Elephants, tigers, dolphins and other wild animals at tourist entertainment venues with direct human-animal interactions are routinely mistreated. There is cruelty at every stage of the process, from stressful capture, to long years in captivity. By avoiding exploitative wildlife entertainment venues, you can help reduce the profitability of this industry.

Support responsible venues which offer ethical experiences, viewing these amazing wild animals in their natural habitat, where they belong.

With our Wildlife – Not Entertainers campaign, we are building a global movement to protect wild animals. Working with tourists, travel companies, wildlife venues and governments around the world, we are stopping both the demand for, and supply of, cruel wildlife entertainment. Hundreds of thousands of people have already joined our movement for wild animals. More than 180 travel companies have also committed to end all sales and promotion of venues with elephant rides and shows. This is just the beginning.

Join the movement to protect wildlife at wildlifenotentertainers.org

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