Do humans have right to use animals for commercial?

# How to protect the rights of animals using for commercial

# Seonhye Yoon

# NAIT (Northern Alberta Institute of Technology)

## Introduction

Humans use animals for commercial in various fields: For example, zoos, animal testing for medicines or cosmetics, food, and tourism products. However, as interest in the rights of animals increases, opinions have been suggested that all of these are animal abuse and selfish actions only for human benefit. Among them, there is much controversy over zoos, aquariums, and animals for tourism. However, it is impossible to release all animals in numerous zoos and aquaria to nature right now, so we should consider their current situation and ways to improve and protect their right.

## Animals for commercial

According to the Oxford University Press (OUP, 2021), the definition of a zoo is "An establishment which maintains a collection of wild animals, typically in a park or gardens, for study, conservation, or displays to the public." However, if people know the incident that occurred in Copenhagen in 2014, it is difficult to regard the zoo as a facility that exists to preserve wild animals. According to The Guardian (2014), the zoo in Copenhagen euthanized the giraffe, Marius, despite protests from people because his genes were common.

However, that does not mean that the treatment of animals in the zoo with rare genes is good—for example, the tragedy of the white tiger. White tigers in the wild are very rare, so they are not found much in historical records. White tigers are more like mutations with rare recessive genes. (Downes, 2021) However, if humans breed white tigers in a limited environment, people can commonly produce white tigers. Most white tigers found in the United States are born through inbreeding and have the same ancestor. (Luo, 2014) According to Animal Corner (n. d.), white tigers have numerous genetic diseases: strabismus, weakened immunity, abnormal kidneys, shorter forelegs, arched or curved backbone, and twisted neck.

Aquariums are not much different from the zoo, too. In 2016, In Defense of Animals announced the ten worst tanks for dolphins and whales. Among them, Georgia Aquarium, which ranked fourth, is notorious for its "dying pool." (In Defense of Animals, 2016) For four years, from 2012 to 2015, three Belugas and five dolphins died in Georgia Aquarium. (Frohoff, 2016)

## Animals for Tourism

Humans are also using animals for tourism: shark diving activity in Australia, riding elephants in Thailand, exotic animal cafes, etc. Unique hands-on activities with animals are attractive and exciting tourist products. (Giampiccoli et al., 2020) However, the treatment of animals that are the subject of the activity is unethical. For example, the biggest problem with elephant tourism in Thailand is the cruel torture to domesticate elephants. (Bansiddhi, Brown, and Thitaram, 2020) Humans beat elephants from a very young age, stab them with sharp things, starve them, and do not put them to sleep. (Karsten, 2019) Even after being domesticated, stumpy things to control elephants cause fear by stabbing them in the flesh. (Karsten, 2019) Like these cases, numerous animals are suffering and dying in zoos, aquariums, and tourist attraction spots and without being guaranteed minimal rights.

## Animal Welfare

All facilities that use animals commercially should prioritize new directions for animal welfare and environmental improvement. According to Sherwen and Hemsworth (2019), factors that significantly influence animal welfare include individual animal factors and environmental characteristics. Among environmental factors, the presence of visitors is a unique feature of zoos and aquariums. Because all zoos and aquaria cannot release all animals to nature, they should study animals' individual and species characteristics well and pay attention to implementing environmental factors. In addition, an efficient system should be in place to systematically evaluate and monitor animal welfare. (Barber, 2009, Barber et al., 2010, Butterworth et al., 2011, Hosey et al., 2009, as cited in Whitham and Wielebnowski, 2013)

## Animal Welfare: Individual Animal Factors

Until today, the zoo industry has traditionally matched management standards and environment according to species. However, all animals have different preferences due to differences in their genetic composition, experience, and temperament. (Barber, 2009, Boissy et al., 2007, Hosey et al., 2009, as cited in Whitham and Wielebenowski, 2013) Therefore, it is increasingly common to obtain results on each individual's nature, temperament, and emotional state through zookeeper evaluation of the animal (Whitham and Wielebenowski, 2013). As such, frequent welfare evaluations conducted in the current animal welfare science are not only about identifying the health status of animals (Wolfensohn, 2018). Animal welfare researchers consider the various characteristics of each animal and help them live happier and more satisfied.

## Animal Welfare: Environmental Features

The most significant difference between commercial and wildlife environments is the accessibility of visitors (Sherwen & Hemsworth, 2019). Animals used in commerce have frequent contact with visitors, and their distance from people is also very close. According to Fernandez, Tamborski, Pickens, and Timberlake (2009), most studies argue that visitors cause stress in animals. However, the cause of stress varies depending on the species characteristics, noise level, visitors' frequency, and size. (Fernandez, et al., 2009) Each animal has a limitation in that interaction with visitors negatively affects. (Fernandez, et al., 2009) Therefore, it is believed that the welfare of animals can be guaranteed if the size of visitors, frequency of visits, and rules to follow when visiting are well set.

## The Stance that People Should Take

Not all facilities that use animals for commercial provide bad treatment to animals. Just people need to avoid zoos, aquariums, and tourist attractions that abuse animals. However, it is difficult for individuals to know even all aspects of the facilities. There is a good tip to know to avoid facilities that abuse animals. According to Sullivan (n.d.), facilities certified by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) in the United States can be trusted. Also, people may want to visit zoos and aquaria from countries outside the United States. In that case, people should avoid uncertified zoos and aquariums by referring to the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums certification. (Sullivan, n.d.) Finally, Virtual Reality (VR) could be a good alternative if visitors cannot visit depending on animal circumstances. VR is a technology designed to make it feel real in a virtual space, which will allow people to see animals more vividly or enjoy activities without negatively interacting with them.

## Conclusion

Welfare standards for animals in zoos, aquariums, and animals used for tourism are rapidly rising, and a better environment is being created accordingly. However, there are still many animals suffering from life threats and abuse. People should establish more substantial legal restrictions for animals and research animals steadily. The environment a particular animal has in the wild is not the best criterion for that animal (Wolfensohn, 2018), so animal welfare science should create an internal and external environment that is more suitable for animals. Also, VR technology can be a good alternative when zoos and aquariums are used for edutainment purposes according to the developing science and technology.

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