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The Dolphin Project makes proposal to RWS over dolphins

Posted by [theonlinecitizen](#) on May 30, 2011 [21 Comments](#)

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The following is a letter from Mr Richard O'Barry to Resorts World Sentosa (RWS) and the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) on the importation of 23 wild dolphins from the Solomon Islands by RWS for entertainment purposes at its Integrated Resort in Singapore. Mr O'Barry heads The Dolphin Project at the Earth Institute, which works to free and prevent wild dolphins from captivity.

Singaporeans and the Animal Concerns Research and Education Society ([ACRES](#)) are also calling on RWS to free the dolphins. (Visit [ACRES Facebook](#) page for more.)

Support the campaign "[Save the World's Saddest Dolphins](#)".

May 28, 2011

Mr. Tan Hee Teck, CEO

Resorts World Sentosa

Cc Ms Aw Kah Peng, CEO

Singapore Tourism Board

Dear Mr. Tan:

I am contacting you on behalf of the Dolphin Project of Earth Island Institute. Our organization is working to protect dolphins around the world and prevent dolphins from being removed from the wild for captivity.

We know that Resorts World Sentosa has dolphins now being kept in the Philippines that were captured in the waters of the Solomon Islands.

We would like to offer the possibility of setting up a rehabilitation and release project for these dolphins in conjunction with Resorts World. Your cooperation would ensure that these dolphins be returned to their natural habitat where they can thrive, as opposed to keeping them in captivity, separated from their original home range, their pod and their extensive social environment.

In helping return these dolphins, Resorts World would show the people of Singapore and the world that you are a true steward of the environment and a responsible company sensitive to the harm captivity inflicts on dolphins.

We have reached an arrangement with the villagers of the Solomon Islands for them to stop killing dolphins in exchange for funding from Earth Island to help develop alternative energy, clean water, and sustainable fishing. We believe that if the people of the Solomon Islands can end their 450-year-old hunts to help dolphins, Resorts World can too.

We know the people of Singapore love dolphins. Most Singaporeans would object to keeping dolphins in captivity if they knew the dangers to the dolphins and the horrific capture practices of the Solomon Islands and other dolphin capture countries.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal.

Sincerely,

Richard O'Barry

Marine Mammal Specialist

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21 Responses to “The Dolphin Project makes proposal to RWS over dolphins”

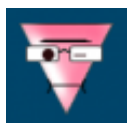


1. Good Karma Release Dolphins [30 May 2011](#)

I never been to Resorts World Sentosa, and don't know what they are setting up there for the Dolphins.

Can they set up whatever show they intend to have without including Dolphins? If they can, they can make some publicity, that they are working with Mr Richard to rehabilitate the Dolphins to be released to the wild.

Heck they can even make a movie out of it, and show at Arts Festival around the world. Selling Singapore and selling RWS too. Its a sure win win deal.



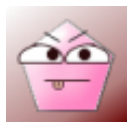
2. Robert Teh [30 May 2011](#)

Human wayang goes like this:

Get monies (build casinos)

Repent a little (give some to charity, release turtle, dolphin)

Claim success (be at peace with immortal)



3. Sam [30 May 2011](#)

This animal activists are so misguided, so extremist.

By their reasoning, they might as well ask our zoo to release all animals and close down.

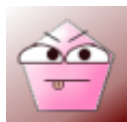


4. Amazed [30 May 2011](#)

Sam, your narrow minded misinformed view is quite staggering – these dolphins are wild animals captured to be put on show.

Zoo animals are either born in a zoo or transferred there to protect them. Zoos also educate people.

Two different cases. Educate yourself before criticising those trying to save animals



5. Sam [30 May 2011](#)

ACRES does not deserve our support.

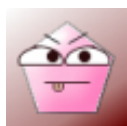
As keefe said, people have different interest and passion. We being in a multicultural multireligion Singapore have to strive to live together peacefully.

However ACRES, in their misguided love for animals, have sought to impose on us their beliefs and principles. This is pure arrogance, thinking they are the only superior ones who knows best for animals and in effect look down on the rest of us.

ACRES has also sunk to a new low – exploiting innocent children in their video to tug at our emotional strings. Using kids to wave placards with message they didn't write or understand is downright despicable.

We and the authorities need to carefully monitor this so-called animal activists closely. We have to be vigilant against their radical passion. Otherwise like in other countries, we will be seeing animal activists firebombing animal researchers home or deliberately destroying properties of companies they deem evil.

Singapore is a small country, we can't afford to allow this activists to grow or worst to eventually sink to the use of terrorism to advance their cause at all cost.



6. Sam [30 May 2011](#)

@amaze, don't narrow your thinking, ask yourself where does zoo animals come from originally?

By your reasoning, keeping dolphins will also help us to understand them better and educate us.



7. popcorn [30 May 2011](#)

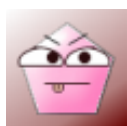
Yes, zoo animals originated from the wild, but dare say the intention is to protect endangered species from wicked human captivity and slaughter, and helping to breed them to repopulate the decimated numbers, else they would disappear from our fragile earth like the Mammoth elephants.

Simple logic, you must have eggs before you could hatch chickens.

Dolphins are lovable creatures, until their numbers are threatened, should be living in the wild.

Children should be trained from young to love animals, and if they are taught to love and be kind to animals, as an adult they would treat the society they live in the same.

ACRES is not as radical or fanatic as some self rightist think, don't see how the effort to free those RWS dolphins would lead to terrorism. These self rightist people are the ones that are radical and fanatical.



8. theonlinecitizen.com/.../the-dolphin-pr...

Sam [30 May 2011](#)

Its flawed logic to separate captive dolphins from animals in zoos. Ultimately they are all wild animals kept near people in zoo or lagoons for us to appreciate and understand them.

What ACRES has done is to pick a easy subject, in this case dolphins to politicize. Like all activists they have anthropomorphised the dolphins, to make them human, to play with our emotions.

You say train the children – I say ACRES are indoctrinating these kids with their extreme ideology.

ACRES proposal is nothing more than a ultimatum to RWC to release the dolphins, anything else is unacceptable to ACRES. This is ACRES radical and fanatical view and any sane person can see through their real agenda.



9.

georgia tong [30 May 2011](#)

To Sam

You are so shallow. Your own argument is flaw.

Read up more about animal welfare and environmental issues before you open your big mouth.

It is people like you that makes the world a worst place to live in. You are just so full of self. So proud of the human race.

The world is for all living things, not just selfish human like yourself.



10.

Activist [30 May 2011](#)

I would firstly like to comment that Sam's reasoning is indeed the misguided and extremist one here, one that allows no room for a civil society to exist, one that is self-righteous, narrow-minded, and born of fear and ignorance. I do not say this without reason. Let us dissect his arguments thus far:

He claims that animal activists are "misguided and extremist", who "might as well ask our zoo to release all animals and close down". Unfortunately for him, ACRES is making this bid to free the dolphins based on solid fact and not blind passion. Nothing else could have driven them to write a full report (<http://www.saddestdolphins.com/report/Acres%20-Resorts%20World's%20Dolphins%20Report.pdf>) against keeping wide-ranging wild animals in captivity. Mind you, the term is "wide-ranging", referring to how dolphins, among other animals, require unlimited space (i.e. the ocean) to roam, if they are to live well. This is the main reason why the dolphins should be released. They are simply not suited to living life in a tank.

The term "wild" also refers to animals which know how to fend for themselves in their natural habitat. This brings us to Sam's point on how since ACRES is extremist based on his misunderstood perception of its reasoning, zoo animals should also be released. He claims that it is "flawed logic to separate captive dolphins from animals in zoos. Ultimately they are all wild animals kept near people in

zoo or lagoons for us to appreciate and understand them”. Sadly, Sam, this is an imagined flaw in logic. Zoo animals are not wild animals. Left on their own in the wild, they are less likely to survive without proper rehabilitation because of their dependence on humans, having lived all their lives in captivity. They have also been bred in captivity because some of them are endangered and need to be protected from extinction. Given such, it is appropriate for zoo animals to remain in captivity for their welfare. This in turn, leads us to how wild animals do not require our protection, much less, our interference in their lives. Hence, the dolphins ought to be freed.

Another point that he mentioned is that keeping the dolphins is an advantage that allows us to understand animals better. It is not anthropomorphising to state that this is an extremely selfish point of view, to seek human advancement at the expense of the animals’ suffering. It is a long-documented fact that animals, especially dolphins, have the propensity for emotion. According to the book “In defense of dolphins: the new moral frontier” by Thomas I. White, the dolphin brain has “a limbic system, the part of the brain which generates emotions”. Dolphins can express grief, feel fear and be overwhelmed with stress. In other words, the amount of suffering these dolphins will undergo, in the process of being deprived of their natural environment, transported so many times, and being confined to a small area against their needs, is undeniable. These are facts you cannot argue against unless you have done research yourself and can prove otherwise. Prioritising your own selfish desire to simply gain knowledge over the dolphin’s welfare is telling of the kind of person you are, Sam.

Sam also claims that ACRES is seeking to impose their beliefs on the rest of Singapore. There are 2 things we have issues with here: firstly, does this make every other advocacy organisation arrogant congregations of people with severe superiority complexes like Sam imagines ACRES to be? Does this make Human Rights Watch or UNICEF self-righteous organisations every time they campaign for the rights of child slaves in Africa or the abuse of women? No, like ACRES, these organisations are seeking to right a wrong they perceive in the community. It’s simply a pity, then, you do not view the holding of wild dolphins under stressful duress and captivity as wrong.

Furthermore, claiming that ACRES is exploiting children to convey its message is plain childish. Any child, with their innocence and pure conscience, can tell you that it is wrong to hold a wild animal in captivity. These children could not have participated in the project without agreeing with ACRES and also, without their parents’ consent. Would any parent allow their child to blindly participate in a so-called radical organisation’s advocacy efforts, and allow their children to be brainwashed? Obviously not, because in the first place, these children are not blind (and perhaps far more sensitive to suffering than most adults), and secondly, these parents rationally know that ACRES is not radical and their children are not being brainwashed.

Sam also delusionally confuses animal activists with extremists. Please do not confuse the term “activist” with “terrorist” or “extremist” so easily, Sam. Did you know our grassroots leaders are also termed “grassroots activists” in our national paper, The Straits Times? Does this make each GRC/SMC in grave danger of neighbourhood grassroots “terrorists”? You are right to be concerned that animal activists do not get out of hand. However, in what way is ACRES being extreme? As it gone to the extent which you wrote of, and actively harmed anyone to achieve its goal? No, as far as rational human beings which we all are can see, all that has taken place thus far is a peaceful media campaign; a written, well-substantiated report, and a credible letter written (not by a terrorist, mind you, but a marine mammal specialist) to stakeholders accountable for the dolphins. This is no indicator that the next thing ACRES will do is to bomb the RWS. The problem is your argument is nothing more than a slippery slope, a highly extreme perception that one circumstance necessarily leads to another. It does not. And with rational monitoring by the authorities, we have absolutely nothing to fear.

I also take issue with saying that we “can’t afford to allow this activists to grow”. Any organisation, Sam, whether it’s Renci Hospital or SPCA, being non-profit, is motivated by a strong passion for their respective causes. Based on your flawed logic, Sam, then any organisation has a propensity for violence, extremism and terrorism because they are guided by “radical passion”, and will “eventually sink to the use of terrorism to advance their cause at all cost”. Because according to you, then any charitable organisation is dangerous and should be not be encouraged to grow and advocate for their causes. Please be rational. The government won’t allow such situations to arise. And in the first place, they wouldn’t even allow such organisations to exist if they were deemed to be too extreme. ACRES is a registered charity. It has the government’s support because it is credible and rational.

Also, what is there to politicise about this whole issue? What ulterior motive do you think ACRES has other than the welfare of the wild dolphins? I resent that you claim that “like all activists they have anthropomorphised the dolphins” to “play with our emotions”. No doubt you have PETA in mind. As an animal welfare activist myself, I do not agree with PETA’s tactics sometimes. But while ACRES is not PETA, both organisations would never create campaigns based on thin air. They are supported by hard, undeniable facts – that animals have emotions, undergo stress, and should not be held in captivity where it is unnecessary. If you feel your emotions have been played by facts, then too bad for you. Most logical people use their brains to assess the facts before arriving at a stand, and this case, they would assess ACRES’s evidence before deciding to support the cause, and not simply because they were moved by the video or their emotions were “played” by solid evidence.

Finally, what alternative do you have to offer other than the Big Scary Ultimatum that ACRES has proposed? Sam, do you have a smarter plan for the welfare of the dolphins? Because if you do, then please raise it, rather than mindlessly attacking ACRES here. Reading your comments has personally been a rather disturbing experience for me, because your accusations directed at ACRES seem more like descriptions of your own viewpoint: “radical” and “fanatical”. We are dying to know what ACRES’s real agenda is. To take over the world? Come on. To state that ACRES’s proposal is an “ultimatum” is ridiculous, because firstly, it is not going to harm anyone. (Any poor IR visitors out there planning to sink into depression upon being deprived of their dolphin spa experience?) Secondly, an “ultimatum” means the rejection of ACRES’s proposal will result in retaliation. Use your brain and think – will the logical, cool-headed people who have created this campaign and sent this letter so far launch an attack against RWS and the government? As I have said before, it’s precisely because ACRES is credible and rational that the government has the assurance to register this charity in the first place.

I commented because of all the misconceptions and flawed logic fraught with Sam’s arguments against the cause. Hopefully, this clarifies ACRES’s purpose and helps more people understand this project, while at the same time, take Sam’s comments with a pinch of salt.



11.

pugdragon [30 May 2011](#)

Having such diverse views about animal activism or anything else is what lead to peaceful demonstrations & debates. It allows us to grow intellectually & educates folks with opinions on both different sides of the spectrum. Not to mention having a voice to proudly stand up for what we believe in. Personally, I believe in animal rights, the dolphins should not be in captivity. Peaceful demonstrations outside RWS, anyone? Oh wait, I forgot. I’d probably be arrested for that “crime”.

777



12. come on [30 May 2011](#)

as I have said before, the dolphins matter should be discussed at other forum, not here...



13. Lenox [30 May 2011](#)

If Sentosa is really building the world biggest oceanarium with world professionals and ensuring their best well-beings, I think I can accept that the dolphins might be happier there compared to being in the wild. Who makes assumption that living in the wild has no stress for these animals?

Furthermore, unless they can get all the major clubs like Australia Sea World, Hong Kong Ocean Park to release their dolphins, I do not see why we ought to....



14. The Observer [30 May 2011](#)

I think ACRES should make available a private screening of The Cove to these locals who have no idea what is happening to these dolphins. Maybe charge them a discounted ticket price of \$6 to pay for the cinema rent.

Or even ask the producer of The Cove if can release on free TV in Singapore. Then let people know. Some say ignorance is bliss. But ignorance + arrogance = disastrous.



15. Real Perspective [30 May 2011](#)

We have reached an arrangement with the villagers of the Solomon Islands for them to stop killing dolphins in exchange for funding from Earth Island to help develop alternative energy, clean water, and sustainable fishing.

We know the people of Singapore love dolphins. Most Singaporeans would object to keeping dolphins in captivity if they knew the dangers to the dolphins and the horrific capture practices of the Solomon Islands and other dolphin capture countries – Mr Richard O'Barry

Mr. Richard O'Barry What alarms me is villagers of Solomon Island used to kill these dolphins. Are you able to track/assure us that all the RWS dolphins returned to their habitat will not be killed again? You also need to prove to us that RWS did indeed ill-treat these creatures. Singaporeans adored these dolphins and would be the first to take the cudgel if any of them are subjected to cruelty whether physical or mental. As for the 'captivity' and 'cruelty' concerns, nothing is more cruel than to know they will be slaughtered in their natural habitat by unscrupulous mankind.



16. TheEqualizer [30 May 2011](#)

To Sam,

Do you work for RWS? How much they pay you to post here?

Your postings here are absolute rubbish and small-minded...

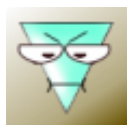
FYI...all animals in a zoo are actually taken from other zoo's...nowadays nobody gets animals from wild anymore unless there is a special reason like endangered species or poaching...



17. A Thought [31 May 2011](#)

I would just like to say props to Activist for a thorough and well-considered response to Sam, on the rationale, aims and purposes of activism.

Not everything can be political – as in party politics – because animal welfare isn't really a vote-getter. But that's where civil society comes in to fill the gap.



18. SARONG PARTY [31 May 2011](#)

Rick O'Barry

Why don't you and your acres do something about this one <http://www.foam-slayer.com/denmark-whaling.shtml>

Why target only the East??



19. ACRES Double Standards [31 May 2011](#)

For unknowing Singaporeans' info:

Solomon Islands dolphin exporter confirms order from Germany

Radio New Zealand International 16 Feb 11;

A Solomon Islands exporter of live dolphins has confirmed that he plans to fill an order from Germany, along with orders from other European countries and Dubai.

of dolphins each country's ordered but hopes to begin hunting at the end of June.

Mr Satu says the other European countries don't want their identity publicised.



20.

JC [1 June 2011](#)

Here's a good way to show your support of Ric O'Barry's Dolphin Project. I got mine.

[http://www.efxusa.com/product/charity-cause-wristbands/SISBROBDP.html?
Product_Attributes1:value=black&Product_Attributes2:value=white](http://www.efxusa.com/product/charity-cause-wristbands/SISBROBDP.html?Product_Attributes1:value=black&Product_Attributes2:value=white)

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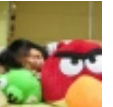
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