

Dolphinaria Doomed?

The UK Government is undertaking a review of dolphinaria and marine parks in the UK, to establish whether their educational, research or breeding benefits are enough to justify the import and display of live cetaceans.

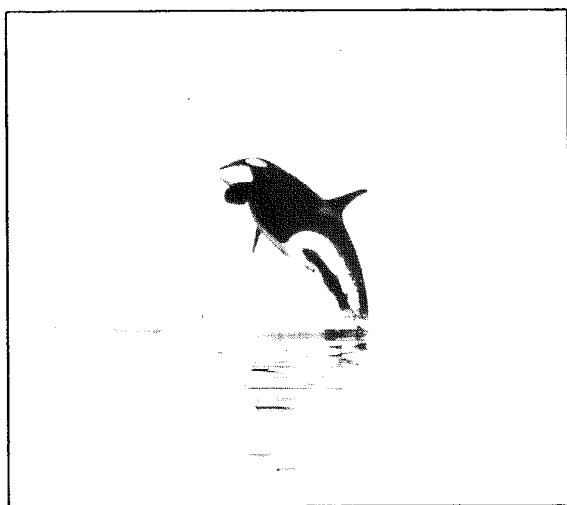
In answer to a Parliamentary Question about future applications for import licences, the UK Environment Minister, Mr William Waldegrave, said:

"My Department has not granted any permits to import dolphins or killer whales since 1983. I am aware of public concern, and it is clear that there are widely differing opinions about the value of dolphinaria.

"I have therefore decided to appoint an independent adviser to consider whether the educational, research and breeding benefits of dolphinaria and similar establishments in the UK are of sufficient value to justify the import and display of live cetaceans (whales). Advice will also be sought on the standards that should be applied to dolphinaria if they can be justified on educational, research or breeding grounds. The review will also take account of legislation, including the EEC CITES Regulation which increased the conservation status of small cetaceans. The views of operators and conservation bodies will also be sought."

The consultant appointed to carry out the review is Dr Margaret Klinowska of Cambridge University. She began work in September, and is due to submit her report by the end of January 1986. According to the Minister, "Any applications to import further dolphins or killer whales to the UK will be determined in the light of this review."

Sources: UK Department of the Environment Press Notices, 6.6.85 and 4.9.85.



Killer Whale (*Orcinus orca*)

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Shipment of Sea Turtle Skins Illegal?

On 26 June, authorities in Panama queried the legality of a transit shipment, on the Ecuadorian ship 'San Jose', of 3175 pieces of sea turtle skin destined for Japan. Japan has entered reservations with regard to trade in Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and Olive Ridley Turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*). Ecuadorian authorities confirmed no export permit was issued. The skins are now presumed to be in Japan contrary to the recommendation, in CITES Resolution Conf. 4.25, that "any Party having entered a reservation with regard to any species listed on Appendix I treat that species as if it were listed on Appendix II for all purposes, including documentation and control."

Source: CITES Secretariat

Taiwan Bans Rhino Horn Imports

Taiwan (Republic of China) has prohibited the import of rhinoceros horn. The official announcement of the ban, by Taiwan's Board of Foreign Trade, was made on 16 August 1985, effective immediately, and was published in the Central Daily News, the following day. The announcement (Trade (74) Commodity No. 22782) does not prohibit possession, sale or use of rhino horn already held in Taiwan. Minister Feng-shu Chang is especially to be commended for his role in achieving this most important development. Taiwan has traditionally been one of the notable consumers of rhino horn, for Chinese medicine.

Source: TRAFFIC (Japan)

Project to Halt Trade in Rhino Products

A new international project to stop the trade in rhino products began in July 1985.

The project is being sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund, with assistance from the African Fund for Endangered Wildlife.

Directed by Dr Esmond Bradley Martin and co-ordinated by Lucy Vigne, specific activities will include identification of smuggling routes into and out of Asia and Africa. Emphasis will be placed on persuading the importers and wholesalers of rhino products, and heads of medical and pharmaceutical associations to use substitutes for rhino horn, such as saiga antelope horn. Attention will also be focused on trying to close down both the legal and illegal trade in rhino products, through contact with senior government officials and with the help of an advisory body.

Prices will be documented to discover whether demand has increased or decreased in the various countries where rhino products are still consumed. These countries include North Yemen, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan.

Considerable effort will be put into increasing public awareness of the crisis affecting rhinos, through the local press in Asia, television, radio and public displays. Posters promoting the use of substitutes for rhino horn will be distributed as part of the mass media campaign. These will stress the urgency of reducing the demand for rhino products in order to save the five rhino species from the very real threat of their extinction in the wild.

Estimated World Population of Rhinos

Rhino Species	1970	1984
Black Rhino (<i>Diceros bicornis</i>)	65000	8800
White Rhino (<i>Ceratotherium simum</i>)	3500	4000
Indian Rhino (<i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i>)	900	1700
Sumatran Rhino (<i>Didermoceros sumatraensis</i>)	1500	660
Javan Rhino (<i>Rhinoceros sondaicus</i>)	35	55

Source: Dr Esmond Bradley Martin