



8 September 2011

Mr. Tan Hee Teck  
CEO  
Resorts World Sentosa (RWS)

Dear Mr. Tan,

**Appeal for response to ACRES and members of the public's concerns**

I hope this email finds you well.

ACRES regrets that offensive comments have been posted on your Facebook page. We would like to reiterate that this was never our intention. We asked that polite comments be posted on your Facebook page and for everyone to not use abusive language.

ACRES hopes that Resorts World will, however, respond to and address public concerns. We sent you an email on 27 June 2011. To date, RWS has yet to respond specifically to the concerns we have raised with regard to the plight of the remaining 25 wild-caught RWS dolphins.

By continually refusing to answer the questions we have raised, RWS will further lose the trust of the public.

As stated earlier, we have read the RWS website and blogs extensively and the concerns we have raised are not addressed there.

We understand that RWS does not take death or illnesses of the animals in your care lightly, and we also understand that the trade in these dolphins is allowed under CITES.

We are appealing to RWS to make a moral and ethical decision. Please find attached below 27 questions we hope you can help to answer. We hope that you will directly address the questions raised in this letter, point by point and in detail.

Having a constructive dialogue can only start if you address the concerns we have raised instead of skirting around the issue. Rather than having ACRES resend the emails, we sincerely hope that you will reply with answers that will specifically address the questions we have raised.

Thank you and we look forward to engaging RWS.

1. We hope that RWS will let the dolphins make the final decision. If RWS truly believes that the remaining 25 wild-caught dolphins are happy in their current enclosures, then ACRES asks that RWS open the enclosure gates leading out to the open ocean (or provide any other opening). If the dolphins are truly happy then surely they will remain in the enclosure? **Will RWS agree to this challenge?**
2. RWS states that "no calves or lactating mothers were among our dolphins that were humanely and sustainably collected". Dolphins are highly social animals living in a close knit family unit. If no calves or lactating mothers were collected, can RWS urgently clarify what was done to these individuals? Were they forcefully removed and separated from their families?
3. When another of RWS' wild-caught dolphins die, will RWS release the remaining dolphins back into the wild?

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Animal Concerns Research & Education Society

4. In a statement issued by a Marine Life Park spokesperson on 27 May 2011, RWS stated "It is our belief that to avert species crises, more controlled dolphin collections should be occurring from a multitude of places and more quality zoological facilities built to increase our understanding of vulnerable species and for breeding purposes." Can RWS confirm that it will not be buying any more wild-caught dolphins?
5. Does RWS believe that dolphins can never be released into the wild considering that RWS is setting up a dolphin captive breeding programme?
6. Do dolphins mainly eat dead fish in the wild?
7. Do dolphins find transportation stressful?
8. We understand that RWS has stated that the dolphins were humanely captured. Can RWS clarify if the capture of the dolphins was stressful for them?
9. We understand that the Solomon Islands government issued a non-detriment finding for the export permits for the RWS wild-caught dolphins. However, did RWS conduct proper scientific population surveys on this species of dolphins in the Solomon Islands before purchasing the 27 wild-caught dolphins?
10. Does RWS know that catching more dolphins might drive species such as the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin towards extinction? IUCN states that "their preference (Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins) as a captive display species makes them vulnerable to depletion from such catches."
11. In your opinion, why is Chris Porter, who sold the wild-caught dolphins to RWS, calling for RWS to "review its motivation for using these animals as a tourist draw"?
12. We understand that RWS is partnering Via Delphi, a dolphinarium in Mexico. Can RWS clarify whether Via Delphi is allowed to import wild-caught dolphins?
13. Is RWS aware of the letter from Mexican Senator Jorge Ordorica (Chairman, Committee of Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries), who was so dismayed at the plans of RWS that he wrote to Singapore's National Development Minister about it? Senator Jorge wrote that Mexico's international reputation was dented as a result of its importing 28 Solomon Islands dolphins in 2003. At least 12 of the dolphins have since died. "Mexico's experience with this single import led to our government imposing an outright ban on importation and exportation of live cetaceans for entertainment purposes and this ban is still in place," the Mexican Senator said. He urged Singapore to consider Mexico's experience and 'the disturbing mortality' of the animals when evaluating applications for the permits to import such dolphins.
14. In your opinion, why did progressive countries such as Chile and Costa Rica ban the capture and display of dolphins? In your opinion, does RWS sincerely and truly believe that to teach its visitors about dolphin protection, the best way is to capture and remove dolphins from their natural habitat, subject them to stressful transportation, let them watch two of their pod mates die, subject them to further stressful transportation, subject them to training and getting them used to humans, feed them a diet they are not used to, house them in an artificial environment and then keep them captive for the rest of their lives?
15. In your opinion, why did United Parcel Service (UPS), whom you paid to transport the first shipment of RWS dolphins from the Solomon Islands to the Philippines, said it would stop moving this kind of cargo, as the practice violated its environmental principles?
16. Is RWS aware of the European Association for Aquatic Mammals Standards for Establishments Housing Bottlenose Dolphins? If RWS is aware of these guidelines, why did it not follow them?
17. Why did RWS house the wild-caught dolphins in a rusty enclosure in Langkawi and deny this initially?
18. Was the dolphin enclosure in Langkawi really 20 metres by 20 metres as RWS stated? Please note that ACRES has photos of the enclosure during its construction.

19. Since RWS is using the United States as an example, is RWS aware that in the late 1980s, facilities in the United States implemented a voluntary moratorium on collection of bottlenose dolphins from the wild, and this remains in place? Why is RWS not following this progressive and voluntary decision?
20. If dolphins can thrive in facilities and have also been bred successfully in facilities, why then did RWS need to acquire wild-caught dolphins? Please note that the question here is not whether catching dolphins from the wild is legal and forgetting the moral issues involved, but specifically why did RWS not acquire captive-bred dolphins?
21. Did RWS purchase wild-caught dolphins because they are cheaper than captive bred ones?
22. RWS has stated that the bottlenose dolphins are not classified as endangered nor are they threatened with extinction. Why then is it so important for RWS to breed them in captivity?
23. Can RWS let the public know which airline will be transporting the dolphins to Singapore if they do come?
24. Will RWS inform their visitors that the dolphins were caught from the wild?
25. Can RWS guarantee that no visitors will be injured by the dolphins during contact sessions?
26. In your opinion, would you be happy if you were forcefully removed from your home, transported under stress to a foreign world, forced to eat a diet you are not used to and made to spend the rest of your life in captivity?

Yours sincerely,

Louis Ng (MSc)  
Executive Director  
ACRES

CC: *Local and international medial agencies*  
*Government agencies*  
*Ms. Krist Boo, VP Communications, RWS*  
*Mr. John Hallenbeck, VP Operations, RWS*  
*Mr. Robin Goh, Assistant Director, Communications, RWS*