

SAVE JAPAN DOLPHINS COALITION

ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE + EARTH ISLAND INSTITUTE + ELSA NATURE CONSERVANCY OF JAPAN + IN DEFENSE OF ANIMALS



Sept. 27, 2007

Dr. Gordon McGregor Reid, President
World Association of Zoos and Aquariums

VIA E-MAIL: gorgendr@chesterzoo.org

Dear Dr. Reid:

The Save Japan Dolphins Coalition, consisting of the Animal Welfare Institute, Earth Island Institute, Elsa Nature Conservancy of Japan, and In Defense of Animals, is deeply concerned with the ongoing efforts in the Solomon Islands to capture and export dolphins, caught in conjunction with cruel drive fisheries, to zoos and aquariums around the world.

We believe the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums should speak out strongly against these proposed exports and prevent its member aquariums from importing any dolphins from the Solomon Islands.

As you know, the Solomon Islands recently joined the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which requires that exporting countries certify that such trade would not be detrimental to the survival of the species. The proposed exports can not go forward until robust population studies are conducted on the health of local dolphin stocks from which captives have been removed. However, such studies have not been done. The IUCN's Cetacean Specialist Group has expressed its concerns about the lack of such necessary studies to the government of the Solomon Islands and CITES as recently as June of this year. Even if the depth of knowledge on Solomon Islands' dolphin populations was extensive and it was found that the populations could sustain such losses, we trust that WAZA would still find that the capture methods

employed to obtain dolphins would be in violation of its ethics and welfare standards.

We appreciate that WAZA has issued a strong statement in opposition to its members obtaining dolphins caught in conjunction with the cruel drive fisheries in Japan. The Solomon Islands situation is, unfortunately, very similar.

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We have urged WAZA previously to take strong steps internally against its members that continue to catch and trade in dolphins caught in drive fisheries. We encourage you to take similar steps in the case of the Solomon Islands, including ousting member aquariums that violate the ethical, humane rules of WAZA in regard to trading in drive-fishery-caught dolphins.

If you need further details about the Solomon Islands captures and trade in dolphins, please contact us through David Phillips, Earth Island Institute (415) 788-3666, davep@earthisland.org, or Ric O'Barry, Save Japan Dolphins Coalition (305) 668-1619 or <ricobarry@bellsouth.net>.

Sincerely,

Susan Millward
Animal Welfare Institute

David Phillips
Earth Island Institute

Elliot Katz
In Defense of Animals

Eiji Fujiwara
Elsa Nature Conservancy

Richard O'Barry
Save Japan Dolphins Coalition