



Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak  
Chair, Miral Asset Management  
Chair, Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority

16 December 2016

His Excellency Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak,

I am writing today on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) Asia because SeaWorld, a failing corporation that is garnering international condemnation for its treatment of marine animals, is planning to expand to Abu Dhabi by 2022. We urge you to ensure that it isn't allowed to set up in your country unless it forgoes keeping dolphins, seals, polar bears, penguins, and any other animals at its new park – and focuses instead on modern wonders like immersive virtual reality or augmented reality that actually enthrall and inspire people.

Since the release of *Blackfish*, the documentary that exposes SeaWorld's violent capture and cruel confinement of orcas, the company's attendance has tanked, top executives have been ousted, celebrities such as Harry Styles have urged fans to stay away, and hundreds of employees have been laid off – including 320 just last week. In 2014, the parks lost 1 million visitors, and in 2015, SeaWorld San Diego was the worst performing major theme park in the world. Meanwhile, support for Disney, Six Flags, and Universal Studios – which don't rely on abusive animal entertainment – has swelled.

Succumbing to public pressure, SeaWorld recently agreed to end its sordid orca-breeding program – which has since been made illegal in California – but this does nothing for the nearly 200 orcas, other dolphins, and whales currently swimming in endless circles and breaking their teeth in frustration gnawing on the concrete corners and metal bars of their tiny tanks. And it does nothing for the 38 orcas, more than 100 other dolphins, dozens of beluga whales, and countless smaller animals who have already died on SeaWorld's watch, many of them prematurely.

We're glad to hear that Yas Island will have 3-D mapping and virtual reality technology, as modern travellers would rather spend their money on technologically advanced attractions than antiquated marine-mammal shows and exhibits, but we're still concerned SeaWorld may plan to use Abu Dhabi as a life raft for its floundering business model.

Please use your influence to ensure that Abu Dhabi maintains its extraordinary reputation for having cutting-edge attractions – including a state-of-the-art Formula One racetrack, the world's fastest roller coaster, and buildings that push the limits of architectural imagination – and halt any plans for a SeaWorld with animals.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours most respectfully,

Jason Baker  
Vice President of International Operations  
PETA Asia

PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

**Hong Kong**

GPO Box 1700  
Central  
Hong Kong

**Philippines**

Unit 706, Fedman Suites  
199 Salcedo Street  
Legaspi Village  
Makati City 1229  
Philippines

Info@PETAAsiaPacific.com  
PETAAsiaPacific.com

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**Affiliates:**

- PETA U.S.
- PETA India
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