



PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

Dear Ms Obdam:

On behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), I'd like to offer our congratulations on your successful reign. You proudly represent Thailand, which is why we're hoping that during the upcoming Miss Universe pageant, you will make a statement to help inform millions of people about the suffering of betta fish (or Siamese fighting fish). Although vibrant and beautiful, these fragile fish suffer terribly in Thailand.

PETA's investigation into Thailand's betta fish industry revealed entrenched neglect and cruelty to fish who are bred into a life of suffering for the pet industry. Our video footage shows bettas confined to small containers in water that barely covers their bodies. The investigator – who visited 10 facilities, including breeding farms as well as packing facilities – also saw numerous dead bettas, including many on the floor who had likely suffocated to death. Bettas were also left out of the water for long periods while workers carelessly sorted them for shipping. Dead fish were found on every farm that was visited.

You can view the footage [here](#).

Bettas are packed without food and left to starve as they are shipped across Thailand, sometimes on journeys that can last for several days, and then sold both there and in other countries. A worker told the investigator that a tranquilizer is added to the water so that the fish won't eat their own tails. Many more bettas die before reaching their final destination.

Adding to their misery, many bettas are sold and used for deadly blood sport in Thai fish-fighting rings. Although these fighting rings are currently banned because of the pandemic, they will operate again when they can.

Betta fish are complex and highly sensitive animals – known for their peacekeeping strategies and attentive parenting – yet the pet trade confines them to tiny bottles, plastic bags, or cups with scarcely a couple of inches of water. Every look at the betta fish pet industry reveals cruelty.

I hope you will agree that betta fish deserve better and will do your part to help them. Will you make a statement by saying a few words to highlight the plight of betta fish in Thailand via social media or a written statement, or in one of your speeches at the pageant? PETA can also design a special pin for you to wear on your costume. You have already used your public prominence to make an important difference by raising awareness of mental-health issues. Will you please also help these abused fish?

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you and wish you the best of luck in the Miss Universe pageant.

Yours truly,

Ashley Fruno  
Director  
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