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JUSTICE FOR CAPTIVES AGAINST THE USE OF TIGER CUBS AS PROPS FOR PHOTOGRAPHS AT DREAMWORLD, AUSTRALIA

At approximately 10:00am on Sunday 16th February 2020 and in continuation of the previous day's events, Justice for Captives targeted a second theme park on the Gold Coast that exploits animals to enhance tourist experiences and increase profit margins.

At the busiest time of the morning, members of the Justice for Captives group protested at the entrance of the park in efforts to raise awareness of the use and abuse of tiger cubs bred to be exploited for profit under the guise of 'education' and 'conservation'.

Sev Avedis, a spokesperson for Justice for Captives states *"We must look closer at the true motivations behind tourists wanting to pay for a wildlife experience or a photograph with an endangered or 'exotic' animal. Young animals (and in this case, tiger cubs) are particularly vulnerable to this exploitation due to their innocence and influence of constant human interaction imposed by Dreamworld"*

Dreamworld houses over 400 animals (predominantly native species) however is most famously known for breeding critically endangered tigers. Whilst we respect the collection of donations for global wildlife education and conservation programs, Justice for Captives disagree that animals should be put on display and offered as props for profit ('photo opportunities') and tourism 'experiences' in the process. Regardless of whether some or all money collected goes towards local or global conservation programs, having your photo taken with an animal such as a tiger cub does in no way class as education or promote conservation – nor does it enhance charitable giving and behaviours in members of the public visiting the park.

Sophisticated conservational efforts through captive-breeding programs in some circumstances *can* be proven effective in recovering dying endangered populations. However, Dreamworld is an amusement park that relies on profit through tourism, which jeopardises real opportunities to educate the general public on urgent environmental matters that impact animals.

Sev Avedis further states: *"The world is becoming intimately aware of the facts surrounding the use of animals for entertainment. I am saddened to learn that when people attend Dreamworld or Paradise Country for an entertaining day out, with key attractions being wildlife encounters – particularly with tiger cubs over recent months (see [Paradise Country](#) or [Dreamworld](#)). Other theme parks such as Sea World or Australian Outback Spectacular whom specifically train animals to perform tricks and unnatural stunts are really becoming outdated, too. We can certainly deduce there is a disconnect with these awe-inspiring animals and what enrichment they require to live peacefully. Dreamworld in this instance offers 'experiences' with rare tigers in*



an unrealistic interpretation of naturality. We want a world where no one is needing to be entertained by the suffering of animals forced to perform or be on display”

Justice for Captives invite Dreamworld to demonstrate a moral responsibility to animals by committing to ending the use of endangered tigers, native wildlife and livestock as props for entertainment and objects for driving profit and commercial sales.

GENERAL INFORMATION: ANIMALS USED FOR HUMAN ENTERTAINMENT (DREAMWORLD)

TIGERS: Rare and endangered animals are constantly put on show for human entertainment and profit. Dreamworld's 24yr-old tiger exhibit displays many tigers bred and bought from around the world and trained through reinforcement using meat and cow's milk to perform stunts to wow paying customers. Whilst they are young, Dreamworld will regularly parade the cubs around the park through large crowds and encourage countless children to pat them and pose for a photograph – before being sold to zoos (see <https://youtu.be/cCmsmlv1KFs>)

Tigers are intelligent, solitary, nocturnal apex predators – and what Dreamworld does is put these animals in confined and unnatural conditions which contradicts every one of their natural behaviours their wild cousins are free to express.

Justice for Captives acknowledge Dreamworlds efforts to encourage customers to donate to the “Dreamworld Wildlife Foundation” using pocket change and merchandise sales, however no percentage of the DWF funds are donated through Dreamworld themselves which suggests contradicting motivations behind keeping and breeding these animals.

OTHER ANIMALS: Dreamworld houses over 400 animals, most in the Corroboree section of the park. Amongst these animals are:

- Two crocodiles, one of which has been in the same, small concrete enclosure for over 20 years without vet care.
- Wombats and emus in almost completely bare, red-dirt enclosure. Wombats and emus in the wild graze on grass and walk amongst the bush. Employees of Dreamworld have stated that if there was grass in the enclosure, they would eat it.
- Trained dingos, endangered tree kangaroos, kangaroos, koalas, snakes and other native animals waiting each day to pose in photographs in small artificial enclosures.
- Several turtles in a pond covered in moss due to poorly kept enclosures
- Sheep, ready to be herded and roughly shorn as part of a show.

<https://www.Dreamworld.com.au/things-to-do/Corroboree/wildlife-photos>
<https://themeparks.com.au/blog/tiger-cubs>