

## Statement on Expedia Group Animal Welfare Policy

Dolphinaria-Free Europe ([DFE](#)) initially welcomed news that Expedia Group, one of the world's largest travel platforms, intended to update its animal welfare policy. However, after reviewing the new policy, our expert network of NGOs and professionals finds this updated policy very disappointing.

As part of its new policy, Expedia Group has stated it will now only promote zoos and aquaria that are accredited by the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (Alliance) or are members of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) or one of their regional and national associations. Member facilities are required to meet welfare and other standards agreed by the Alliance and WAZA.

However, membership in WAZA and related captive display industry associations still allows for the exploitation of cetaceans in conditions where it is impossible for them to thrive and their health suffers—i.e., membership offers no assurance of adequate welfare for cetaceans. WAZA members, such as Loro Parque in Spain, SeaWorld in the United States and the Moscow Zoo in Russia, all profit from cetaceans being held in captivity for entertainment.

By Expedia Group relying on such association memberships, these changes to their animal welfare policy are only cosmetic and lag far behind many other leading travel companies, such as Virgin Holidays and TripAdvisor, which now choose not to support or promote the exploitation of cetaceans in captivity for commercial purposes. Expedia Group's policy does nothing to reduce the demand from the travel industry for captive cetaceans (whether captive-bred or wild-caught) for the purpose of entertainment.

Therefore, in our view Expedia's new policy falls far short of reflecting public and expert concerns regarding the keeping of cetaceans in captivity.

DFE maintains that cetacean welfare is inherently compromised in captivity and that captive cetacean displays and shows have little or no educational or conservation benefit. We urge Expedia Group to look again at its policy, with a view to revising it further to support phasing out captive cetacean displays and shows. Such an approach would be in line with the mounting scientific evidence showing captive conditions diminish cetacean welfare, and with ethical arguments and public concern opposing this exploitative practice. Over 300,000 members of the public have signed up to DFE member [World Animal Protection's campaign](#) urging Expedia Group to end ticket sales to captive cetacean facilities. Expedia Group needs to take significant steps to keep up with other, more progressive travel companies that are already helping to make this the last generation of cetaceans in captivity.

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