



August 1, 2018

Dr. Peter Fankhauser
Chief Executive Officer
Thomas Cook Group plc
3rd Floor, South Building
200 Aldersgate
London
EC1A 4HD

Dear Dr. Frankhauser,

We are writing on behalf the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks & Aquariums (AMMPA) and the International Marine Animal Trainers' Association (IMATA) to urge Thomas Cook Group to reconsider its decision to stop selling tickets to SeaWorld Orlando and Spain's Loro Parque because of their care for and public display of killer whales in their world-renowned institutions.

Our request is based on science, research and facts verified by the Alliance, which is the preeminent trade association and accrediting body for zoos, aquariums, and marine parks throughout the world that exhibit marine mammals. The Alliance supports the highest standards of care for marine mammals and contributes to their conservation in the wild through public education, scientific research, and the rescue and rehabilitation of sick and injured animals in the wild. Our accredited institutions in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean—including SeaWorld Orlando and Loro Parque—collectively possess the largest body of marine mammal experience and expertise in the world.

As one of the oldest and largest animal training organizations in the world, IMATA is dedicated to advancing the humane care and handling of marine animals by fostering communication and sharing best practices among individual professionals through training, public display, research, husbandry, conservation, and public education. IMATA members utilize the most advanced and responsible management techniques benefiting the marine animals in their care to ensure the public's experience with these animals fosters emotional and personal connections that promote conservation of our marine environments and respect for marine species.

While we share Thomas Cook's desire to ensure animal welfare in tourism, it is disappointing that your company is ignoring the fact that both institutions exceed the

highest animal care standards in the world and are leading contributors to education, conservation and research efforts to conserve killer whales and other marine mammals in the wild. SeaWorld and Loro Parque are also leaders in marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation and provide an important connection between people and daily work to protect marine life. This work is exactly what your customers said they desire when they report they want you to “take animal welfare seriously.”

Do not deny your customers the choice to see for themselves all that SeaWorld and Loro Parque are doing for animals globally to ensure animal welfare. Let them experience firsthand how inspiring and often transformational it is to see marine animals up close and in a safe, educational environment that is positive for people and for animals. This is what makes accredited marine parks so critical in the global efforts to protect marine mammals and the oceans.

SeaWorld has rescued more than 31,000 animals in the past five decades through its SeaWorld Cares program and provides funding and professional expertise to important animal and habitat conservation projects around the world. As part of its \$10 million commitment to killer whale conservation, SeaWorld has helped fund a breakthrough nutritional assessment of Northern Resident killer whales and has done work on killer whale milk composition to understand their nutritional requirements and pregnancy and lactation to understand how killer whales metabolize toxins in their environment.

Loro Parque continuously receives awards of excellence and the highest ratings from visitors who recognize the institution’s commitment to marine mammals. Loro Parque also makes important contributions to conservation and research projects throughout the world. Since 2011, Loro Parque has funded or participated in research projects with orcas focused on bioacoustics, genetics, physiology, ethology, biotracking and biometrics. They are also participating in a project to evaluate the effects of realistic pollutant exposure on in vitro immune function in killer whales in order to generate data for a population model of contaminant effects in killer whales. As a result of this scientific work, in the last six years, six scientific papers have been published in peer-reviewed journals (and another three have been submitted), two masters and six diploma theses have been produced, and 11 presentations have been given at international congresses.

Like all Alliance members, SeaWorld Orlando and Loro Parque are mission driven and make animal welfare their top priority. The conservation of animals is what inspires the professionals at these outstanding organizations to dedicate their lives to providing the best care of marine mammals both at their organizations and in the wild. Their

dedication and the opportunities they provide the public to connect with and learn more about these amazing animals is what draws millions of visitors to these parks.

We understand the pressure animal rights organizations like PETA can bring to bear on a company through endless protests, letter writing and demands, constantly moving the goalposts on their desired action. They targeted Thomas Cook Group, and they will continue to pressure your company and others. However, please don't confuse customer interest in animal welfare with the radical agenda of animal rights groups that attacked you and that are now taking credit for your decision to end support for organizations that are actually doing significant work to save marine mammals.

Contrary to allegations from animal rights organizations, science shows that marine mammals in accredited facilities thrive and live as long as or, in many cases, much longer than their counterparts in the wild. They receive high quality, nutritious food, regular and preventative veterinary care by licensed professionals, and exercise and play in ways that are mentally and physically beneficial. These are facts from the experts who know and care for the animals, not those whose agenda it is to end the public display of all animals.

Again, we urge your company to reconsider its decision to deny your customers the chance to experience SeaWorld and Spain's Loro Parque marine parks that are leading the work to save marine life.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Dezio
AMMPA President & CEO



Grey Stafford, PhD
IMATA President