

*"Protect the
Ocean and You
Protect Yourself."*



Peter Fankhauser, CEO
Thomas Cook Group

March 2, 2018

Dear Dr. Fankhauser,

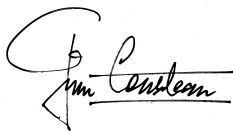
I hope this message finds you well. I understand that Thomas Cook will be carrying out an audit of the notorious marine park SeaWorld. As someone who has had the great privilege of observing orcas in the ocean – where they belong – I felt compelled to contact you ahead of this inspection in the hope that you will keep the following information in mind when assessing your company's future relationship with this unethical theme park.

We know so much more about wild animals today than we did decades ago when humans first started removing them from their families and forcing them to entertain us in captivity. Science tells us that orcas are intelligent, social, far-ranging, and psychologically complex animals with long lifespans. They pass language and other learned behaviors on to their offspring – a practice that is now recognized as a form of culture. The orca brain is among the largest and most complex of all mammalian brains, and its structure indicates that these animals are capable of higher cognitive abilities such as intuition and feelings of empathy, guilt, and even embarrassment. It is this complexity that makes them especially vulnerable to psychological and physical suffering in captivity.

Empirical evidence also tells us that in the wild, orcas navigate by echolocation, bouncing sonar waves off objects to determine their shape, density, distance, and location. In marine parks such as SeaWorld, however, the animals' sonar reverberates off of the concrete walls in their tiny tanks. They are overwhelmed by their own vocalizations, which many experts believe to be an intensely distressing experience. I have long likened their plight to that of a human blindfolded in a prison cell.

If we accept, as we must, that orcas are highly intelligent, social animals who feel pain and joy, love and grief, and fear and longing, then we must also reject facilities that profit from denying these ocean dwellers everything that's natural and important to them. As such, the only logical, ethical outcome of this audit must be for Thomas Cook to sever its ties with SeaWorld entirely and immediately. The time has come to view the captivity of orcas as part of our past, not a tragic part of our future. Those of us who care about marine life – and we are many – await your response.

Sincerely,



Jean-Michel Cousteau
President