



Credit: Moving Animals / Amy Jones



**THE REAL
RESPONSIBLE
TRAVELLER.**

Which travel companies are still failing wildlife?

Content

World Animal Protection is registered with the Charity Commission as a charity and with Companies House as a company limited by guarantee. World Animal Protection is governed by its Articles of Association.

Charity registration number
1081849

Company registration number
4029540

Registered office 222 Gray's
Inn Road, London WC1X
8HB

Introduction	3
Summary of this report	4
Why protecting wildlife in tourism matters	6
The role of the travel industry	8
Methodology	10
Company selection	10
Company wheels	11
Company scores	12
Wildlife icons	14
Results	16
Who's falling behind	16
A closer look	17
% Scores for animal welfare considerations in companies' business models	20
Section 1 - Commitment	21
Section 2 - Targets and performance	22
Section 3 - Changing industry supply	23
Section 4 - Changing consumer demand	23
Bottom of the barrel	24
Conclusion	26
Recommendations	28
References	31
Appendix 1 - 10 steps to become wildlife-friendly	32
Appendix 2 - How to draft an animal welfare policy	33
Appendix 3 - Ready-to-go animal welfare policy template	36



Photo: Wild elephants in a row at Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe. Credit: World Animal Protection / Aaron Gekoski

The Real Responsible Traveller: Which companies are still failing wildlife?

Responsible tourism is an increasingly popular term in the travel industry, as well as being increasingly important to travellers^{1,2,3}. The term “responsible tourism” should indicate that all involved - companies and travellers - are taking responsibility for their travel activity. Our report, *The Real Responsible Traveller*, reviews global leaders in the tourism industry on their animal policies and wildlife offers, a topic usually conspicuously missing from the larger responsible tourism discussion. The conversation around responsible travel is broad and encompasses highly important issues such as carbon emissions, environmental degradation, and cultural sensitivity. Animal exploitation is often left out of the picture when travel companies, travel associations and travel guides discuss the importance of committing to responsible operations.

Travel companies that publicly celebrate their sustainability credentials are often failing to take responsibility for the impact of their sales of captive wildlife entertainment. This sustains the captivity of hundreds of thousands of wild animals in exploitative conditions worldwide.

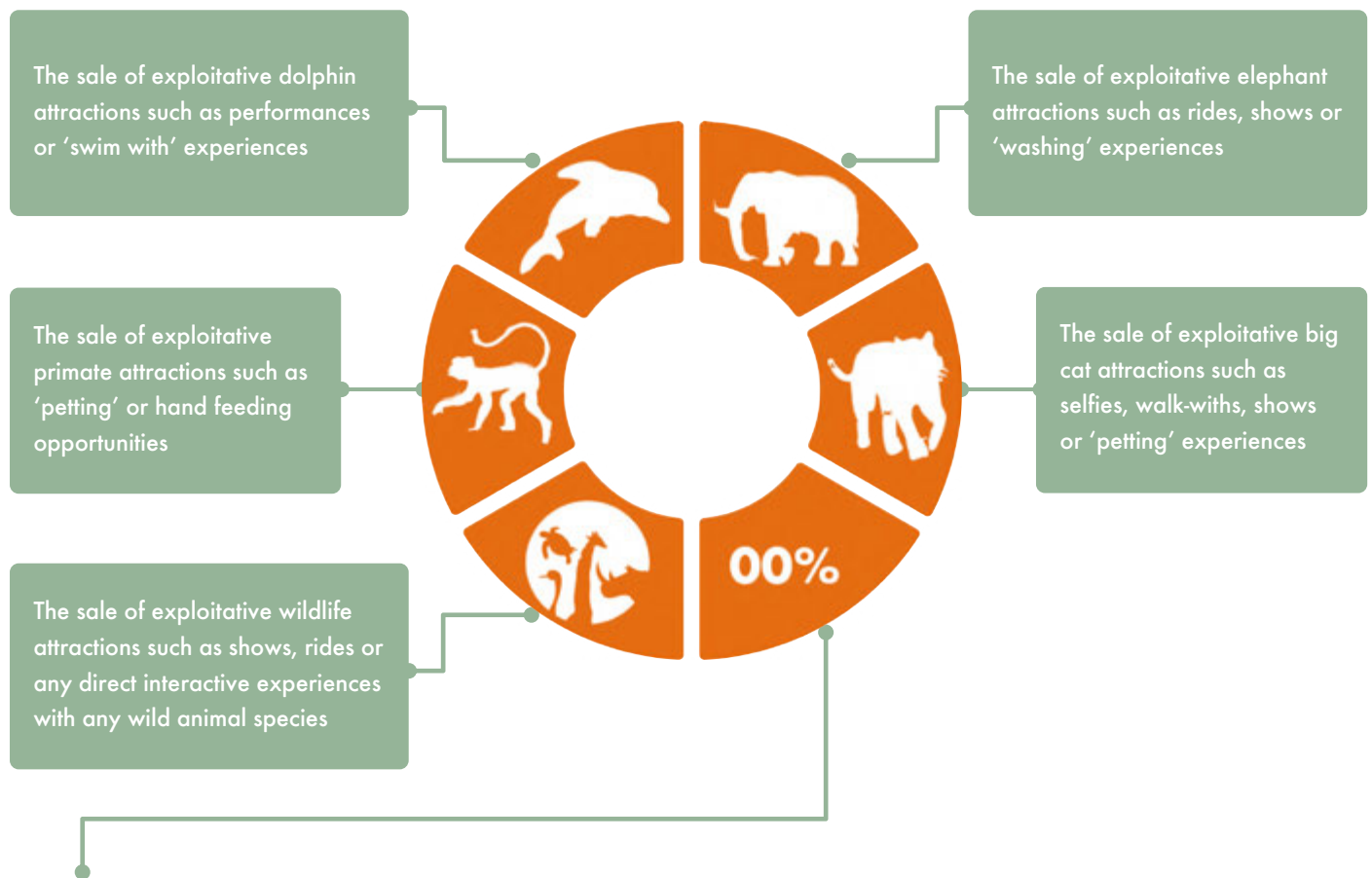
Tourists are being misled into believing companies that are highlighting their ethical and sustainability commitments are generally accountable when it comes to issues relating to human impact on the natural world, yet for wild animals this is frequently not the case.

Like many, we believe responsible travel can be a force for good. We encourage the travel industry and consumers to read this report and visit our website (www.worldanimalprotection.org/responsible-travel) to learn more about travelling responsibly for wild animals. The industry recognises that travellers have a choice who they book with, and we hope more companies and consumers will consider their impact on animals as part of their responsible travel plans.

Summary of this report

'The Real Responsible Traveller' presents an assessment of 13 of the world's leading travel attraction/experience companies, and tour operators on their commitment to wildlife friendly tourism. This research, commissioned for a second time by World Animal Protection and undertaken by the University of Surrey, highlights which companies are still failing wildlife by selling exploitative experiences and attractions or by operating their business without concern for animal exploitation. 'The Real Responsible Traveller' gives industry leaders, travellers, the public, travel companies and World Animal Protection supporters a clear picture of the progress the travel industry has made to protect wild animals and where work still needs to be done.

The assessment considers 6 key areas:



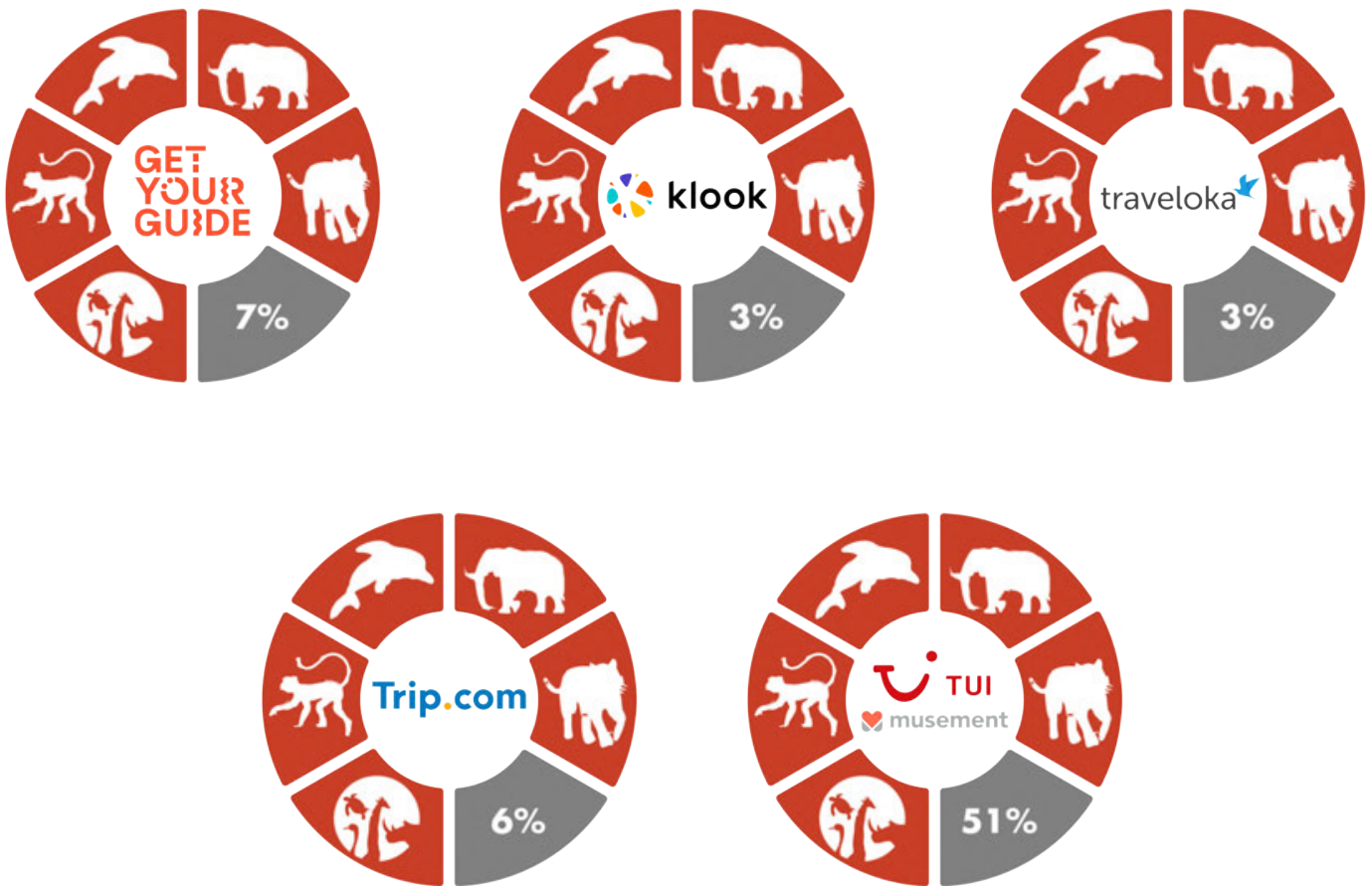
This research component, conducted by independent research partner the University of Surrey, assigns companies a percentage score using comprehensive methodology that assesses companies across four key areas:

- 1. Commitment:** Public availability and quality of published animal welfare policies and how applicable they are to all their brands.
- 2. Targets and performance:** Availability and scope of published time-bound targets and reports on progress towards meeting animal welfare commitments.
- 3. Changing industry supply:** Availability and quality of engagement with suppliers and the overall industry, to implement wildlife friendly changes.
- 4. Changing consumer demand:** Availability and quality of educational animal welfare content and tools to empower consumers to make wildlife-friendly travel choices.

The results show that only a handful of the world's leading travel companies are protecting wildlife by opposing the sale of exploitative wild animal attractions: Airbnb, Booking.com and The Travel Corporation have proactively removed captive wildlife entertainment. Tripadvisor/Viator have removed ticket sales for captive wild animal entertainment, but continue to promote exploitative wildlife tourism through images and reviews on their website. All four of these companies have invited advice from World Animal Protection to improve their commitment to rejecting animal exploitation and wildlife friendly tourism and these scores are a testament to the steps these companies have already taken to protect animals.

While opposing the sale of exploitative attractions is a great step in the right direction, becoming a truly wildlife-friendly company is a journey. All four of these companies scored between 44% and 75% in the independent assessment of their publicly available animal welfare commitments, showing that even in ethically progressive companies there is ample room for improvement. All companies that were assessed can and should improve their commitment and implementation of animal welfare practices and their rejection of exploitative wildlife attractions. This will ensure their suppliers meet meaningful standards and their customers enjoy holidays with the confidence that they are not supporting wildlife exploitation.

Critically, five of the world's leading travel companies are severely failing wildlife. These companies, who are among the most influential businesses in the global tourism industry, are still selling harmful exploitative wildlife experiences across a wide range of wild animal species. Four of these companies scored less than 10% for their businesses' consideration to animal welfare across their policies, targets, and supply chains. These market leaders are failing wild animals and perpetuating the exploitation of wildlife across the global tourism industry.



Why protecting wildlife in tourism matters

What is wildlife entertainment?

Wildlife entertainment includes activities that:

- **risk** portraying or trivialising wild animals as pets, novelty objects, comedians, or domesticated species
- **encourage** animals to perform behaviours that are either unnatural, unnecessary, or harmful
- **involve** procedures that may be considered stressful or harmful to all or individual animals
- **expose** visitors or handlers to unnecessary risks of injury or disease
- **profit** beyond what's needed to look after animals at facilities while professing to phase out captive wild animal keeping, or that may risk replication of similar activities in harmful ways in other places.

Worldwide, wild animals are taken from the wild or bred in captivity to be used for entertainment in the tourism industry. Activities and attractions that are considered wildlife entertainment are those allowing tourists close contact with wild animals or to see them perform. Popular examples include tiger cubs made to pose with tourists for selfies, elephant rides and washing, and swim-with-dolphin experiences.

Captive wildlife tourism often requires the removal of wild animals from their natural habitats, or separation from their families at an early age if captive bred and is linked to the legal and illegal wildlife trade. Keeping wildlife in captivity for entertainment offers no genuine benefit to the conservation of the species.

The entertainment is not only demeaning, but the suffering also starts the moment the animals are captured from the wild or bred in captivity. In many cases they are separated from their mothers at an early age, and then exposed to harsh training which causes physical and psychological damage that can last a lifetime. They experience harm, stress and discomfort at entertainment venues which fail to meet their basic wild animal needs.

A 2015 study by Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), commissioned by World Animal Protection, reported up to 550,000 wild animals suffering for tourist entertainment in wildlife attractions worldwide⁵. They also found that very few travellers can recognise animal cruelty and consequently continue to leave positive reviews for low-welfare venues.

However, some wildlife attractions are humane and ethical and contribute to the protection of wild animal populations, harnessing tourism's potential to be an economic rationale for protecting nature. These attractions may include observing wild animals responsibly in their natural habitats from a safe and respectful distance. They may also involve viewing them in genuine sanctuaries or wildlife-friendly facilities that are part of efforts to phase out captive wild animal use for tourist entertainment.

Travel companies need robust animal welfare policies that protect wildlife at tourist attractions to which they sell tickets and promote. Travel companies must educate and empower customers to make animal-friendly travel decisions. This involves 'choice editing' (the process of controlling or limiting the choices available to consumers to reach an end goal, in this case, removing cruel wildlife tourism activities and promoting wildlife-friendly alternatives). It also includes providing ethical alternatives that put the welfare of the animals first, while providing safe, memorable travel experiences for tourists to see wildlife on holiday.



Photo: A pod of spinner dolphins off the west coast of Oahu, Hawaii. Credit: World Animal Protection / Rachel Ceretto

This is important now, more than ever, as the travel industry builds back growth in tourism following the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to a total stop of international tourism for much of 2020 and hit many of the popular travel destinations hard. The loss of tourism revenue following the global pandemic has further demonstrated that it is not sustainable to build a captive entertainment industry that relies on income from tourism when that income is not always dependable. With tourism at a stand-still, the care and wellbeing of thousands of wild animals that should never have been born into captivity, becomes a serious concern.

Besides the serious animal welfare and conservation concerns surrounding wildlife entertainment, Covid-19 has shown how the demand and exploitation of wild animals exposes us all to disease and damages our social and economic wellbeing. It's important for all travel companies to classify all direct tourist contact and performances with all wild animals as unacceptable to protect wild animals and people around the world.

Now is the time for the travel industry to build back better as a responsible and resilient sector by rejecting animal exploitation as part of company values and actions.



The role of the travel industry

Tourists put their trust in wildlife entertainment venues associated with major household travel brands, like those in this report. Travel agencies, associations, tour operators and booking platforms promoting and selling wildlife entertainment venues lead tourists to assume such activities are acceptable, or even beneficial for wild animals, when in fact they are inhumane and cause lifelong harm to wildlife.

This is particularly true for companies that market themselves as responsible travel. For example, Trip.com has recently become a member of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)⁶, with the company publicly celebrating their commitment to become a more responsible travel operator. However, the focus of their current commitment revolves around carbon offsetting, and there is no mention of any intention to review their wildlife entertainment offers. Similarly, TUI Musement has recently announced a new scheme to certify the sustainability credentials of its experiences, alongside the GSTC⁷. TUI has expressed that their objective is to “give customers sustainable choices for experiences” that consider carbon emissions, food waste and energy, yet has not communicated any plans to include animal exploitation considerations or review their captive wildlife offers.

Travel companies worldwide play a crucial role in changing the demand and the supply for captive wildlife experiences. Those companies that are choosing to continue selling captive wild animal entertainment continue to profit from animal suffering. Eighty four percent (84%) of people interviewed in our 2022 global poll believed that tour operators should not sell activities that cause wild animals suffering⁸. Seventy nine percent (79%) of people polled also said they would prefer to see animals in the wild than in captivity if they had the chance⁸. There is a continuing growth in the number of tourists visiting natural and protected areas to see wild animals in their natural habitat which indicates there is already a global shift in demand for wildlife friendly tourism⁹.



Photo: Monkey being used as a photo prop in the Medina, Morocco. Credit: Moving Animal / Amy Jones

Companies selling wildlife entertainment venues lead tourists to assume such activities are acceptable, or even beneficial for wild animals, when in fact they are inhumane and cause lifelong harm to wildlife.

By taking a stance to protect wildlife, companies can also enhance their reputation, brand identity, traveller loyalty, and revenue. Sixty eight percent of respondents from World Animal Protection's global poll said they would not travel with a tour operator or company if they promoted the use of wild animals in entertainment⁸. This means companies not proactively moving towards wildlife friendly tourism are potentially losing business and risking their brand. In a 2019 poll, 79% of travellers who witnessed animal cruelty said they would pay more for an activity involving animals if they knew the animals did not suffer¹⁰. Studies have shown many tourists are becoming increasingly reluctant to support activities that are deemed unethical and there is a growing demand for attractions deemed "sustainable", "eco" and "ethical"¹¹. This demonstrates a significant amount of economic potential for wildlife-friendly venues - a potential that is growing on the world tourism stage.

Observing wildlife is a major travel motive of tourists and plays an important role in their destination selection process; the demand for so-called 'pure' wildlife tourism (i.e., wild animals in their natural habitats) is growing rapidly, as is competition among wildlife destinations. Therefore, destinations will need to secure competitive advantage by seriously considering their approach to wildlife and animal exploitation¹². This also means going beyond a typical 'green washing' approach (i.e., marketing as environmentally friendly but with very little action to minimize impact) to create real, lasting change for animals.

Sixty eight percent of respondents from World Animal Protection's global poll said they would not travel with a tour operator or company if they promoted the use of wild animals in entertainment.

The role of travel trade associations

Travel companies should not solely rely on travel trade associations to set the precedent for responsible or ethical tourism. Research from the University of Surrey, commissioned by World Animal Protection in 2018, found almost all travel trade associations worldwide were not providing responsible guidance on animal use in tourism. At the time, of the 62 entities studied, only two travel trade associations - ABTA in the UK and ANVR in the Netherlands - had set animal welfare guidelines for their members¹³. While these guidelines can be a great start to recognise the importance of animal welfare in tourism, they should not be relied on as the 'gold standard' as they are unfortunately not always comprehensive. For example, ABTA guidelines still do not provide adequate protection for cetaceans in captivity. ANVR and now SATSA in South Africa are both wildlife friendly and are a great starting point for wildlife friendly tourism.

Methodology

Company selection

The companies featured in 'The Real Responsible Traveller' international report are:



Many of these companies were assessed against similar criteria in a previous version of 'The Real Responsible Traveller', "Tracking the Travel Industry", conducted in 2020.

The travel companies were chosen based on the following criteria:

Scale

They are the largest in the world, according to data gathered from a number of cross-referenced market intelligence, research, analysis and statistical platforms and sources.

Relevance

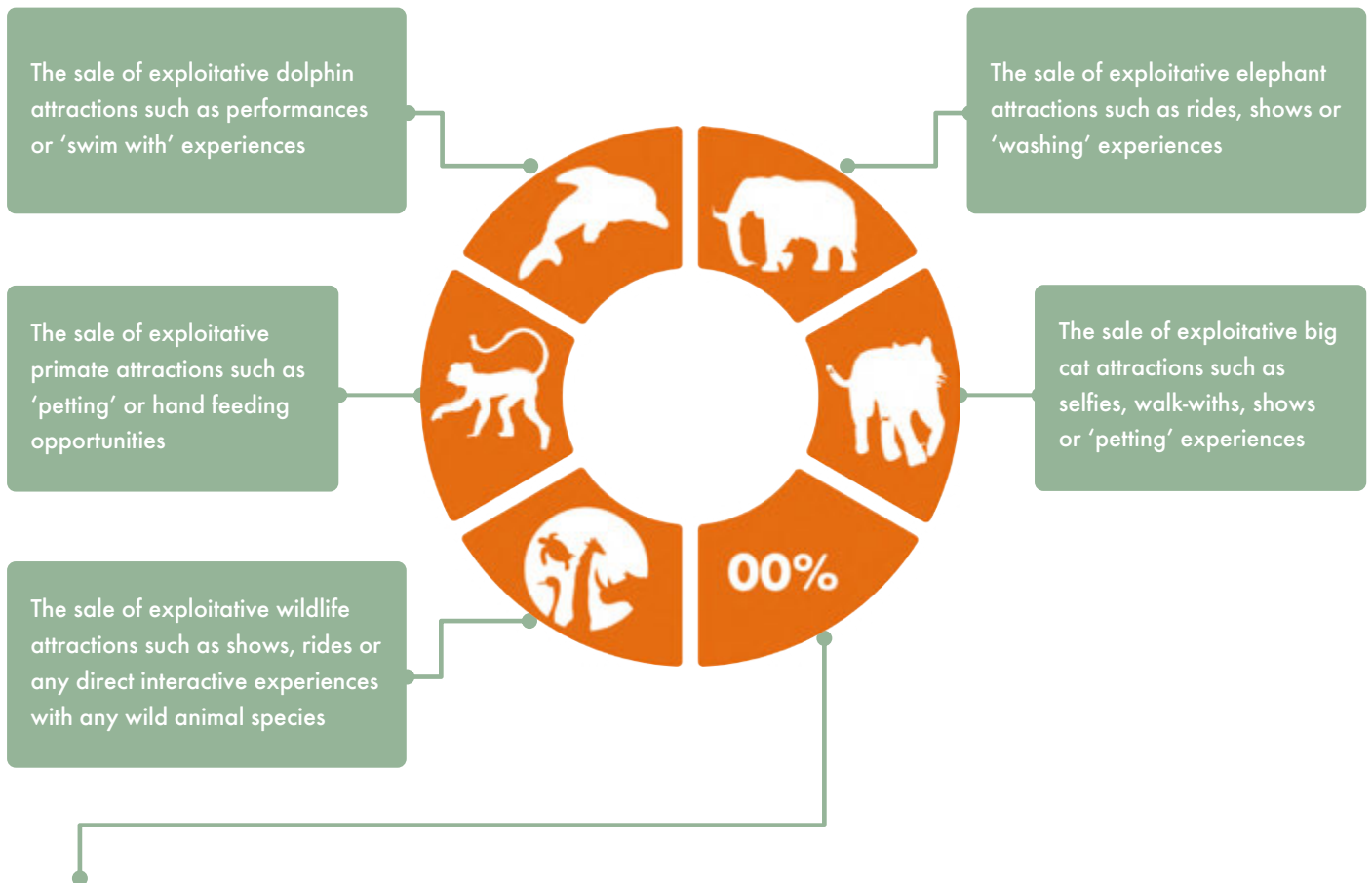
They offer (package) tours and activities or experiences with captive wildlife.

Popularity

They are well-known global brands that consumers trust when making holiday choices

The final selection of companies represents a group of the most influential online travel agencies, travel platforms and booking facilitators, activity and experience specialists, and traditional tour operator stores worldwide.

Company wheels



This research component, conducted by independent research partner the University of Surrey, assigns companies a % score using comprehensive methodology that assesses companies across four key areas:

- 1. Commitment:** Public availability and quality of published animal welfare policies and how applicable they are to all their brands.
- 2. Targets and performance:** Availability and scope of published time-bound targets and reports on progress towards meeting animal welfare commitments.
- 3. Changing industry supply:** Availability and quality of engagement with suppliers and the overall industry, to implement wildlife friendly changes.
- 4. Changing consumer demand:** Availability and quality of educational animal welfare content and tools to empower consumers to make wildlife-friendly travel choices.

Company % scores

The assessment of companies was done independently by the University of Surrey. World Animal Protection employees were not involved during the assessment or scoring of companies. By relying largely on public information, 'The Real Responsible Traveller International' paints a fair, unbiased picture of the travel industry's transparency and progress towards becoming wildlife friendly.

University of Surrey researchers relied largely on published information available on company websites:

- to encourage better transparency of information published by companies
- to avoid bias in terms of those companies World Animal Protection has engaged with in animal welfare policy development
- to ensure that companies were assessed consistently.

Individual company reports were independently created by a team of four researchers and industry experts from the University of Surrey. These confidential company reports were shared with the companies, giving them the opportunity to provide further clarification on publicly available evidence. This was to ensure consistent scoring, to check the factual accuracy of the content and to ensure consistency of the assessment methodology. Companies were also able to provide evidence for information that was not publicly available for some sections of the assessment, notably 'Targets and performance' and 'Changing industry supply'.

Companies were assessed across the four summarised key areas below, to give a final percentage score out of 100.



Commitment

Do the companies have a policy which outlines the general animal welfare values of the company and what animal activities do they find acceptable or unacceptable? Which species are covered?

Do the companies make statements of commitment to protect wildlife from harm through tourism?



Targets and performance

Do the companies have targets for meeting their animal welfare commitments?

Do the companies publicly report on their performance in meeting those targets?



Changing industry supply

Do the companies publicly say how they include binding animal welfare standards in the contracts with their suppliers?

Do the companies take a leading role in the sector to determine and promote responsible animal welfare practices?



Changing consumer demand

Do the companies raise awareness of animal welfare issues among consumers and provide advice to change customer attitudes towards wildlife tourism?

Do they provide resources to shape ethical habits and identify ethical activities at attractions involving wild animals?

Do the companies make this information easy to find and are customers encouraged to raise animal welfare concerns with the companies?



Photo: A lion and tiger cub at an undisclosed venue in South Africa offering petting and interaction with big cats. Credit: Blood Lions / Pippa Hankinson

Companies could achieve a total of 135 points in 'The Real Responsible Traveller International'. The points are divided as follows.






Assessment criteria subject areas	Points / Percentage value
Commitment	30 / 40%
Targets and performance	45 / 20%
Changing industry supply	30 / 20 %
Changing consumer demand	30 / 20%
Total	135 / 100%

Final company reports showing individual scores and comments for each question, and overall scores, were provided to companies along with the methodology. This enables companies to see how and why they received their scores and the improvements needed to score higher in future.

Wildlife icons

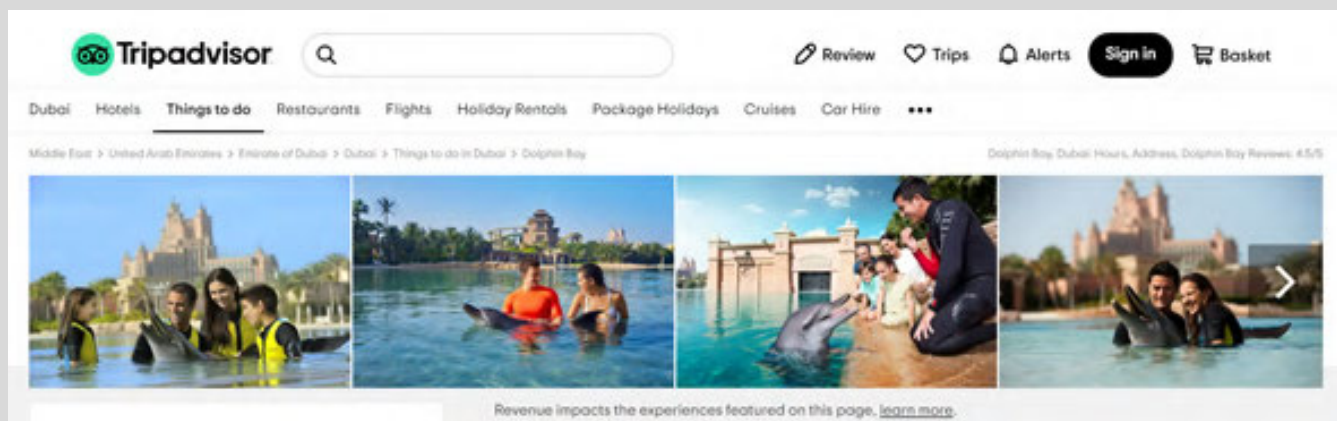
A key part of the journey for tourism companies to become wildlife friendly is to oppose the sale of tickets to attractions and experiences exploiting wild animals. Researchers collected information from the public websites of each of the companies in this assessment, to determine which companies are selling harmful experiences at captive wildlife venues.

We chose to focus on four species categories - dolphins, elephants, primates, and big cats, as well as a general section encompassing all other wild animal species. These animals were chosen due to their complex ecological, social and behavioural needs, their high levels of sentience and their common use in tourism entertainment attractions globally.

	Find out more about how animals can suffer in dolphin entertainment attractions in our report 'Behind the smile'.
	Find out more about how animals can suffer in elephant entertainment attractions in our report 'Elephants not commodities'.
	Find out more about how animals can suffer in primate entertainment attractions in our report 'The show can't go on'.
	Find out more about how animals can suffer in big cat entertainment attractions in our report 'Trading cruelty'.
	All wild animals can suffer when exploited for tourism entertainment. Wild animals deserve the right to a wild life.

Companies were not penalised in this assessment for selling tickets to venues where additional exploitative encounters can be purchased as an optional extra for an additional cost. Companies were also not penalised for inadvertently promoting exploitative attractions through images and reviews, where tickets are not sold directly for those venues or experiences. For example, Tripadvisor allows the promotion of dolphin exploitation through inclusion of imagery on their 'things to do' suggestions tab alongside positive consumer reviews.

While companies were not penalised in this assessment for inadvertently promoting wildlife entertainment where they do not directly sell tickets, it should be recognised that advertising such content will likely contribute to sustaining demand for exploitative tourism experiences, and future versions of 'The Real Responsible Traveller International' may penalise companies promoting exploitation in this way.



Taking responsibility for enforcing wildlife friendly policy

Throughout 'The Real Responsible Traveller' assessment, several companies with wildlife friendly policies (notably TripAdvisor/Viator and Expedia) were found to have tickets to exploitative wildlife venues for sale on their websites that contradicted their animal welfare policies. In most cases, when these sales were flagged with the companies, they were removed quickly and effectively. However, this occurred repeatedly over the course of several months, indicating that exploitative wildlife attractions may frequently be slipping through the net. Companies with wildlife friendly policies need to take accountability for ensuring that all sales on their website adhere to their policies. It is not sustainable to rely on NGOs to identify and report where these sales have been missed.

Results

Who's falling behind?



Failing dolphins

- AttractionTickets.com
- DER Touristik
- GetYourGuide
- Klook
- Traveloka
- Trip.com
- TUI Musement



Failing elephants

- GetYourGuide
- Klook
- Traveloka
- Trip.com
- TUI Musement



Failing primates

- GetYourGuide
- Klook
- Traveloka
- Trip.com
- TUI Musement



Failing big cats

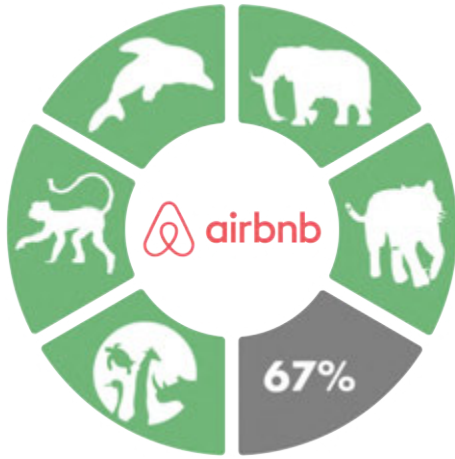
- GetYourGuide
- Klook
- Traveloka
- Trip.com
- TUI Musement



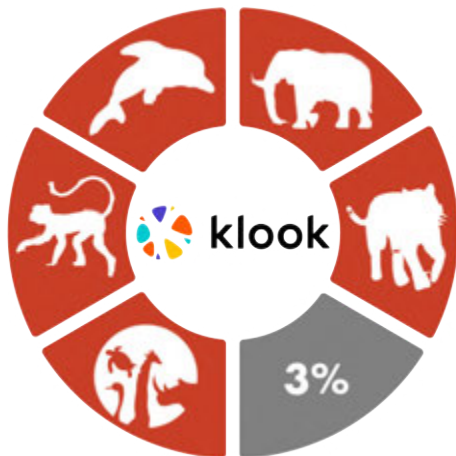
Failing wildlife

- Attraction Tickets
- DER Touristik
- Expedia
- Flight Centre
- GetYourGuide
- Klook
- Traveloka
- Trip.com
- TUI Musement

A closer look (1/3)



A closer look (2/3)



A closer look (3/3)

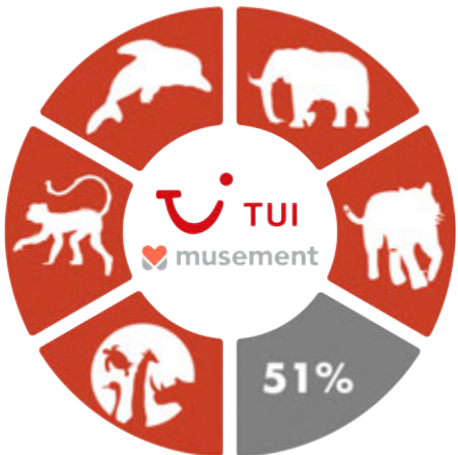




Photo: At Monkey Centre in Mae Rim, Northern Thailand, over 15 monkeys are kept in horrific conditions. Credit: Moving Animals / Amy Jones

% scores for animal welfare considerations in companies' business models

Most of these companies were assessed for the first version of this report (Tracking The Travel Industry) in June and July 2020, when the industry was focussed on mitigating the immediate impacts of the pandemic. Companies were given advance notice that their public facing animal welfare content was to be assessed. Many companies did not have policies that included animal welfare. Possibly due to the impact of Covid-19, companies did not prioritise updating their policy content prior to assessment in 2020.

Now, three years later and in light of the importance of wildlife friendly tourism and its impact on animal and public health on a global scale, companies have had the growing opportunity to build their business back better, for the benefit of animals, tourists, and their brand.

Some companies applied feedback on how they improved their practises since 2020, while others have continued to neglect their responsibility towards wildlife in the tourism industry all together.

Section 1 – Commitment

This section assesses the scope and content of the companies' published animal welfare policies and guidelines.

Our recommendation to all companies is to clarify their policies when it comes to tourist contact with wild animals and performances. Harmful direct interactions, and activities involving captive wildlife performances should be identified and removed from offers. Many of the companies in this assessment that have started to incorporate this into their company policies have only done so for selected species. While we appreciate their change in policy for some wild animals, company policies should clearly state that direct contact is prohibited for ALL wild animal species. This will ensure no wild animals are left vulnerable to exploitation for tourism entertainment.

Critically, four companies received a score of less than 10%, with three of those achieving 0% for having made no attempt to include animal welfare related commitments in their business at all. GetYourGuide, Klook, Trip.com and Traveloka have all entirely neglected their responsibility to reject animal exploitation and to their customers who engage in interactions with wild animals through a ticket purchased on their site.

Other overall recommendations for this section are to ensure that animal welfare commitments are made using clear objective language. This applies to both the actual commitments outlined, and to the scope of the commitment document. A practical recommendation, also benefiting transparency, is to ensure that all animal welfare commitments are located within a single policy document, rather than across multiple documents and reports.

Adhering to the Five Domains of Animal Welfare model, combined with the concept of 'a good life', recognises the importance of animals having positive experiences.

Five Domains of animal welfare

- 1. Nutrition** – factors that involve the animal's access to sufficient, balanced, varied and clean food and water.
- 2. Environment** – factors that enable comfort through temperature, substrate, space, air, odour, noise and predictability.
- 3. Health** – factors that enable good health through absence of disease, injury, impairment and good fitness level.
- 4. Behaviour** – factors that provide varied, novel and engaging environmental challenges through sensory inputs, exploration, foraging, bonding, playing, retreating and others.
- 5. Mental state** – by presenting positive situations in the previous four functional domains, the mental state of the animal should benefit from predominantly positive states, such as pleasure, comfort or vitality, while reducing negative states such as fear, frustration, hunger, pain or boredom.

Wild animals' needs can only be fully met in their natural environment in the wild. Although the Five Domains and the concept of 'a good life' are important to improve the welfare of captive wildlife, they do not justify keeping them in captive environments.

World Animal Protection recognises, however, that captive wildlife venues practising these concepts are likely to have higher welfare standards than those which do not recognise and implement them.

Wild animals' needs can only be fully met in their natural environment in the wild. Non-exploitative, high-welfare venues and genuine sanctuaries are a solution in the short term for long-lived animals already in captivity, where tourists can see wildlife ethically.

Section 2 – Targets and performance

This section assesses any published targets the companies set for implementation of their animal welfare policies and guidelines, and any reporting on performance and progress towards those goals. Targets were also scored according to their ambition, with broader or larger targets receiving more points than less ambitious targets.

While we recognise meaningful changes can take some time to implement, six companies scored 0 against this section (AttractionTickets.com, Flight Centre, GetYourGuide, Klook, Traveloka and Trip.com), showing they have not made any movement to start initiating progress in this area. These organisations have not yet published any animal welfare commitments. When organisations do publish animal welfare commitments, they need to be set with measurable, time-bound targets. We recommend companies clearly outline when commitments have been fully implemented, including a date of implementation. They should also be more transparent with their targets and reporting process. We are aware that some companies have internal reporting measures, and we recommend making these publicly available.

Accrediting bodies and membership associations

Companies sometimes turn to accrediting bodies and membership associations as the basis for developing their animal welfare guidelines. While some accrediting bodies can provide a useful start to consider aspects of animal welfare, there is no one 'gold standard' body to turn to internationally. For example, WAZA is the main global umbrella organisations for zoos and other related institutions. Consequently, it is expected to lead the way with clear animal welfare standards and guidelines for its members, backed up by robust monitoring. However, our research (presented in our report 'The show can't go on') documents a huge range of cruel and demeaning practices that cause animal suffering occurring at WAZA member venues across the world.

Crucially, accreditation standards should not strive to sustain captivity in any way, for example through captive breeding, particularly for commercial captive wild animal entertainment.

For sanctuaries with the purpose of ending captive wild animal exploitation, accreditation bodies such as GFAS, EARS, PASA can be useful as a reference for quality standards to identify best practices. For wildlife watching experiences, following WCA or ACCOBAMS quality standards can be valuable to identify best practices.



Photo: At Phuket Zoo, Thailand, this tiger is kept chained by the neck to a concrete slab so that tourists can take photographs with her. Credit: Moving Animals / Amy Jones

Section 3 – Changing industry supply

This section assesses the efforts of the companies to positively change the practices of their suppliers, and the industry overall, to become wildlife friendly.

Overall, this was the lowest scoring section across companies in the assessment. We recommend companies publicly share commitments related to supplier processes. There is limited evidence of this, other than for Airbnb and TUI Musement, who both provide transparent, comprehensive evidence of supplier processes. GetYourGuide, Klook and Traveloka scored 0 points in this section. The public should know whether suppliers are offered training and what the processes are when guidelines are breached. For companies that are already scoring in this section but have room to improve, we also recommend they take further steps to support the industry to be more wildlife friendly as a whole. Where partnerships with suppliers are made, companies can be examples of industry change by publishing the aim, the targets and the type of support provided.

Tourism companies are increasingly partnering with other industry suppliers to strategically expand their offer reach. In the last few years, several of the companies in this assessment (Trip.com, Tripadvisor/Viator, TUI Musement and GetYourGuide) have partnered with a range of companies from other areas of the tourism market. These partnerships provide consumers with access to a wider range of tourism offers. This can be problematic, however, when a wildlife-friendly company partners with an organisation that still offers exploitative wildlife attractions. It is imperative that partner companies selling additional offers to customers through partner suppliers ensure both companies adhere to comprehensive animal welfare policies. Failing to do so may lead to wildlife-friendly companies inadvertently contributing to wildlife exploitation, despite this contradicting their company commitments and policies.

Section 4 – Changing consumer demand

This section assesses the companies' efforts to raise consumer awareness of animal exploitation and welfare and to empower customers to make animal friendly travel choices.

Points were awarded for referencing or linking welfare content to experts, such as animal welfare NGOs or scientific studies. Companies that did well also made the content accessible either through findable routes, or where customers would see it during their purchasing journey. The companies that achieved high scores for this section, notably Tripadvisor, The Travel Corporation, Airbnb and Expedia, also encouraged their consumers to raise animal welfare concerns and provided them with a dedicated contact or procedure to do so.

Tourism leaves wild animals vulnerable

The loss of tourism revenue following the global pandemic demonstrates that building a captive entertainment industry reliant on income from tourists, when many external factors can mean that tourism income is not always dependable, can jeopardise the well-being of animals and people throughout the industry. With tourism at a stand-still, the care and well-being of thousands of wild animals that should have never been born into captivity, becomes a serious concern. Tourists can reduce the number of wild animals facing a lifetime of suffering in captivity by not buying tickets to these attractions, to avoid sustaining or fuelling demand.



Photo: A mahout steers an elephant in a show at a zoo in Thailand. Asian elephants are trained (using a stick with a sharp hook) to perform tricks for crowds of tourists.
Credit: World Animal Protection

Bottom of the barrel

Critically, five key companies are severely failing wild animals:

**GET
YOUR
GUIDE**

 **klook**

traveloka 

Trip.com

 **TUI**
 **musement**

All of these companies are selling exploitative wildlife attractions across a wide range of wild animal species, including dolphins, elephants, primates and big cats. Enabling interactions between tourists and any of these animals, whether that be performing for shows, posing for photographs, petting, or feeding, can cause unnecessary suffering to animals. Methods to train or prepare the animals can often involve premature separation of babies from their mothers, harsh training methods or physical restraint that causes pain or fear. Further, entertainment venues cannot recreate the complex wild environments and social or ecological conditions these animals would have in the wild. Wild animals cannot thrive when kept for entertainment at tourism attraction venues.

These companies also have significant improvements to make to their business models to take responsibility for preventing animal suffering in the tourism industry. Four of these companies were included in a previous assessment in 2020, and three of those companies have not made any attempt to change their commitments, targets, supply chains or transparency since that assessment (Klook, GetYourGuide and Trip.com). One of those companies (TUI Musement), have a higher score on the assessment conducted by Surrey University, which we recognise is valuable progress in the right direction. However, they still sell tickets to exploitative wildlife venues, and thus still sustain demand for animal cruelty in the tourism sector. Traveloka was assessed for the first time in 2022, but received an incredibly low score of 3%, indicating a complete lack of commitment to considering wild animal exploitation throughout their business.



Photo: At Monkey Centre in Mae Rim, Northern Thailand. Many of these social animals are kept alone in isolated cages with chains around their necks and hardly any space to move. Credit: Moving Animals / Amy Jones

Conclusion

The findings of 'The Real Responsible Traveller International' show that five industry giants (GetYourGuide, Klook, Trip.com, Traveloka and TUI Musement) are severely failing wild animals. While several other companies are taking commendable steps in their journey to become truly wildlife friendly, these five laggards are still selling harmful experiences that exploit wildlife and sustain the demand for damaging tourism practises and have not acknowledged any of the responsibilities that they, and their industry, have towards animal exploitation and the dangers of wild animal/tourist interaction.

The core problems identified in this report are:

1.

Nine companies are still failing wild animals by selling exploitative wildlife attractions, AttractionTickets.com, DER Touristik, Expedia, Flight Center, GetYourGuide, Klook, Traveloka, Trip.com and TUI Musement. Five of these companies are severely failing wildlife, selling harmful exploitative wildlife experiences across a wide range of wild animal species: Get Your Guide, Klook, Traveloka, Trip.com and TUI Musement.

2.

Only five companies assessed had implemented animal welfare advice from World Animal Protection since it was issued in 2020, showing a worrying lack of interest in protecting wildlife.

3.

Nearly half of the companies assessed haven't considered animal welfare in their policies, targets, or supply chains at all, and are thus contributing to sustaining animal suffering throughout the industry.

4.

Many companies that are showing some progress by starting to implement bans for ticket sales to exploitative venues are doing so one species at a time, which severely delays protection for most wild animals.

5.

Most of the top 13 influential companies in this industry are not doing enough to bring awareness to consumers about wild animal suffering in the tourism industry and how to prevent it.

The travel industry plays a huge role in the continuation of captive wildlife entertainment by selling and promoting wildlife activities around the world. Research shows tourists are often unaware of the cruelty behind many captive wildlife attractions. By selling inhumane wildlife activities, travel brands can promote a false sense that activities such as dolphin shows, elephant rides, elephant washing and tiger petting, are acceptable. They are not. The smart travel companies recognise that there are reputational and brand benefits to becoming a known leader in ethical, wildlife friendly travel.

Research shows, even before the pandemic, that customers are increasingly concerned with animal welfare issues. Eighty two percent (82%) of people interviewed in our 2022 global poll believed that tour operators should not sell activities that cause suffering to wild animals⁸.

When companies are transparent in their wildlife policies, publicly state their intentions and report on their progress, customers take notice. Transparency between companies and consumers encourages trust. Taking a strong stance against animal cruelty gives companies a strong market position and builds their brand as a responsible leader in travel.

Travel companies need to take responsibility for creating, fuelling, and fulfilling consumer demand for exploitative captive wildlife attractions. While some wildlife attraction venues, such as marine theme parks, are attempting to future-proof themselves (i.e., alter their business model to adapt to already changing trends and attitudes), travel companies need to be more proactive. For the sake of the wildlife languishing in captivity, travel companies cannot afford to wait for consumer tastes to change while continuing to promote and sell exploitative wildlife tourism venues. A study by Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), commissioned by World Animal Protection found that very few travellers can recognise animal cruelty and consequently continue to leave positive reviews for low welfare venues⁵. To create true and lasting change for wild animals, it is critical that industry change is initiated by tourism companies from a supply-side.

We applaud those companies who have already taken steps to disassociate themselves from inhumane wildlife attractions. While each company can still improve their animal welfare policies, Airbnb, Booking.com, The Travel Corporation and Tripadvisor/Viator have taken a stance against selling any wildlife entertainment. By taking a strong ethical stance against this cruelty, they have shown the travel industry and members of the public the unacceptability of keeping wild animals' captive for entertainment.



Photo: A wild elephant with tourists watching on from a distance at Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe.
Credit: World Animal Protection / Aaron Gekoski

Recommendations

For the public:

The public has the power to stop the exploitation of wildlife in several ways. Consumers can make a huge difference by not taking part in the exploitation and by not buying tickets, and by telling travel companies that they disapprove of their involvement in the captive wildlife entertainment industry. Decreasing the sales of tickets decreases the economic incentive to breed and capture more wildlife. This then reduces the number of wild animals facing a lifetime of suffering in captivity.

It is important for the public to show travel companies that they won't stand for sustained animal suffering in the tourism industry. When the public show they won't support wild animals used for exploitative entertainment, travel companies change their policies and end ticket sales for these attractions. After hundreds of thousands of World Animal Protection supporters publicly called for an end to captive dolphin entertainment, Expedia committed to ending the sale of captive dolphin attractions and activities in 2021¹⁴. This is important across the global tourism market, where many of the companies assessed here have growing influence. For example, Trip.com and Get Your Guide, two of the companies most severely failing wildlife, are expanding their influence across European and North American markets¹⁵. Consumers and travellers have a choice when they travel and need to demonstrate they won't stand for this level of animal exploitation from the so-called market leaders.

For tourism companies:

Companies included in this assessment have been provided full reports on their performance and tailored advice on how to increase their score in future assessments and move further towards wildlife friendliness. Recommendations regarding how all unassessed travel companies can become truly wildlife friendly follow below.



Commitment

Companies should have a public animal welfare policy recognising the following:

Animals deserve the right to a wild life. Animals are best seen in the wild.

Animals in captivity must have positive experiences - 'a good life'. They must not be bred in captivity to sustain the captive population for entertainment.

The Five Domains or the Five Freedoms of animal welfare are critical concepts to provide better conditions for animals. Wild animals must also be protected from interactive tourism experiences, including but not limited to shows and performances, riding experiences, swim with experiences, or for use as selfie props.

The travel industry has a role towards protecting wildlife.

Travel companies should assess their offers for harmful wildlife activities and remove them. This includes direct contact with captive wild animals, animal performances, fights, and races.

Companies should publicly require specific certifications, guidelines or accreditations that experiences or attractions involving wild animals must follow as a minimum to be acceptable. This should be in addition to not offering unacceptable activities such as direct contact, performances, fights, and races. For example, accredited or membership body affiliated zoos/aquaria, Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) certified sanctuaries and World Cetacean Alliance (WCA) certified wild whale watching.

Companies should view as unacceptable, visits to facilities where wild animals are bred for commercial purposes.



Changing consumer demand

Companies should use content that references or links to evidence and experts to raise awareness and change customers' attitudes and behaviour towards wildlife tourism activities and attractions.

Companies should provide consumers with resources to identify ethical activities and attractions involving wild animals.

Companies should provide animal welfare content information where it is findable by consumers through an intuitive path on their user booking journey and on product pages. The content should be easy to 'discover' when users are not looking for it.

Companies should encourage customers to raise animal welfare concerns or queries with them and provide an easy way to do so.



Changing industry supply

Suppliers

Companies should incorporate their animal welfare policy and commitments as part of their binding contracts with suppliers. They should prohibit experiences or attractions involving practices with wild animals which are unacceptable and highlight policies which must be followed to make activities acceptable.

Companies should audit suppliers' performance against the animal welfare conditions stated in their contracts and have a procedure to correct suppliers if they fail to meet standards.

Companies should develop mechanisms to engage suppliers in best practices, such as raising awareness and providing training.

Industry

Companies should lead or co-lead joint initiatives within the industry, or with NGOs (non-governmental organisations) to protect wild animals in tourism. E.g.:

- working with other travel industry bodies to develop standards or guidelines
- advocating for reformed regulations
- developing open resources such as training modules, audit tools partnering with NGOs by providing funding and/or expertise.



Targets and performance

Targets	Companies should publicly set time-bound targets to end selling or promoting experiences or attractions that allow close or direct tourist contact with wild animals, and animal performances, fights, and races.
	Companies should publicly set time-bound targets to only sell or promote experiences and attractions which have specific certifications, guidelines, or accreditations and which only offer acceptable practices involving animals.
Performance	Companies should publicly report on their performance in meeting the targets above.
	Companies should publicly report on the number or % of excursions, tickets sold and offers involving wild animals so the public can see progress.



Photo: Wild lion cubs feeding at Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe. Credit: World Animal Protection / Aaron Gekoski

References

1. Expedia (2022) 'Sustainability Survey'. Available at: <https://info.advertising.expedia.com/sustainability-sludy-2022>
2. Booking.com (2022) 'Sustainable Travel Report'. Available at: <https://www.gstccouncil.org/booking-com-2022-sustainable-travel-report>.
3. ABTA (2022) 'Travel in 2022'. Available at: <https://www.abta.com/industry-zone/reports-and-publications/travel-in-2022>
4. Font, X., Bonilla-Priego, M.J. and Kantenbacher, J., 2019. Trade associations as corporate social responsibility actors: An institutional theory analysis of animal welfare in tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 27(1), pp.118-138.
5. Moorhouse, T.P.; Dahlsjö, C.A.; Baker, S.E.; D’Cruze, N.C.; Macdonald, D.W. (2015) The customer isn’t always right: conservation and animal welfare implications of the increasing demand for wildlife tourism, *PLoS One* 10: e0138939
6. Global Sustainable Tourism Council (2022) 'GSTC welcomes Trip.com Group as a new member'. Available at: <https://www.gstccouncil.org/trip-com-group-joins-gstc/>
7. Travel Weekly (2022) 'Tui certifies sustainability of its tours in 'industry-first''. Available at: <https://travelweekly.co.uk/news/tourism/tui-certifies-sustainability-of-its-tours-in-industry-first>
8. World Animal Protection (2022) Global online survey of 23,726 people across 15 countries (Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, the UK, Spain, South Africa, Kenya, China, India, Thailand, Canada, the USA, Australia, and Brazil). Survey commissioned to *Savanta*.
9. Newsome, D., 2020. The collapse of tourism and its impact on wildlife tourism destinations. *Journal of Tourism Futures*, 7(3), pp.295-302.
10. World Animal Protection (2019) Global online survey of 12,000 people across 12 countries (Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, the UK, China, India, Thailand, Canada, the USA, Australia, and Brazil). Survey commissioned to *Kantar TNS*
11. Von Essen, E., Lindsjö, J. and Berg, C., 2020. Instagranimal: Animal welfare and animal ethics challenges of animal-based tourism. *Animals*, 10(10), p.1830.
12. Gnanapala, A.C., 2017. Destination marketing approaches for wildlife tourism. In *Wilderness of Wildlife Tourism* (pp. 35-59). Apple Academic Press.
13. World Animal Protection. (2018) 'Associated with cruelty - How travel trade associations are ignoring wild animal abuse'. Available at: https://www.worldanimalprotection.org/sites/default/files/media/int_files/how_travel_trade_associations_are_ignoring_wild_animal_abuse_-_report_november_2018.pdf
14. The Guardian (2021) 'Expedia to stop selling holidays that include captive dolphin shows' Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/07/expedia-to-stop-selling-holidays-that-include-captive-dolphin-shows>
15. AXA Partners and Trip.com (2022) 'Trip.com expands travel insurance partnership in Germany, France and the UK' Available at: <https://www.axapartners.com/en/page/trip-com-and-axa-partners-further-expand-in-germany-france-and-the-uk-for-travel-insurance-partnership>

Appendix 1

10 steps to become wildlife-friendly

Protecting wildlife protects people and jobs. The outbreak of Covid-19 has shone a harsh spotlight on how people treat wild animals. The pandemic has challenged us to create change and provided an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild the tourism industry to be more resilient and responsible by becoming wildlife friendly.

As a member of the travel industry, you can help prevent another pandemic, secure livelihoods, and help keep wild animals in the wild by integrating animal welfare into your company's business values and actions. This involves phasing out wildlife entertainment from your supply chain and offering responsible tourist experiences instead. Together we can ensure that this generation of captive wildlife is the last to suffer for commercial gain.

- 1. Commit to rejecting animal exploitation by taking World Animal Protection's Wildlife-Friendly pledge.** Consider communicating this intent to your customers and the public to encourage a wider shift towards more ethical wildlife tourism.
- 2. Assemble a group of enthusiastic colleagues** who are interested in leading organisational changes to embed animal welfare into your company's business operations.
- 3. Review your animal-related product offerings.** Activities that negatively impact animal welfare and the conservation of species in the wild, and that can be of high risk to the health and safety of your travellers include direct interaction with wild animals and wild animals performing. World Animal Protection can provide you with guidance and checklists to identify red flags in your supply chain and remove them.
- 4. Assess the value of these activities to customers** and start to look for non-animal and ethical animal alternatives, such as watching animals from a safe and respectful distance in their natural habitats or at a true sanctuary where the animals are not bred or traded.
- 5. Start conversations with your suppliers.** Help them understand that change is needed, and you are looking for responsible alternatives to replace wildlife entertainment activities. Keep in mind: while ethical experiences exist, a company like yours can help phase out wildlife entertainment by asking ground suppliers to stop commercial breeding and trade while improving the conditions of those animals already in captivity.
- 6. Develop an animal welfare policy and ask suppliers to plan a phase out of any activities and attractions that are no longer acceptable as part of your product offers.** A good policy will help ensure you are assessing animal-based tourism consistently with the latest scientific information and mitigate the risk of being criticized for not doing enough. World Animal Protection can provide support.
- 7. Train staff on animal welfare and how to identify cruel attractions and activities, as well as truly ethical wildlife experiences.** World Animal Protection has training modules, checklists and research that will allow your staff to own your company's animal welfare policy, assess suppliers, and select exciting and responsible alternatives.
- 8. Speak out about your company's commitment to animal welfare and educate your customers on how to be an animal-friendly traveller wherever they go.** Education is vital to shift demand towards responsible tourism. World Animal Protection has numerous educational materials, such as tips on how to be an elephant-friendly traveller.
- 9. Join forces with other travel leaders** to build back a responsible and resilient travel industry by creating and promoting truly ethical alternatives which together with reducing demand will lead to a gradual phase out of captive use of wild animals for tourism entertainment. Contact World Animal Protection to learn more about the Coalition for Ethical Wildlife Tourism.
- 10. Annually re-evaluate, monitor and report on your animal welfare strategy.** We encourage you to continue to update and improve your policy and ensure it's being fully implemented across your organisation and supply chain

Appendix 2

How to draft an animal welfare policy

Purpose, scope, and disclaimer

This toolkit has been created to support companies like yours in drafting a robust animal welfare policy and guiding you in adopting more ethical practices concerning animals, in particular wildlife.

As wildlife encounters are amongst the most popular holiday experience, most of the principles and guidelines that are recommended in this document relate to wild animals, whether in captivity or in the wild. This doesn't mean though that ensuring good welfare for domesticated animals is any less important.

Adopting an animal welfare policy based on this guidance document must not be considered as a certification or in any other way an endorsement by World Animal Protection of your company's animal related practices. The content of this policy guidance should be customised to be relevant for your company.

You can reach out to World Animal Protection if you wish to receive more information or any further support or materials, such as staff training, checklists, or customer education. Email us at tourism@worldanimalprotection.org

What is wildlife entertainment and why is it unacceptable?

There are certain tourist attractions with animals that are simply unacceptable as they will never meet the animals' most basic welfare needs. Wildlife entertainment is one of these particularly worrying types of attractions.

Activities and attractions that are considered wildlife entertainment are those that allow tourists to have close contact with wild animals or see the animal(s) perform. In addition to the entertainment being demeaning, the suffering starts from the moment the animals are captured from the wild or bred in captivity.

In most cases young animals are prematurely separated from their mothers and exposed to harsh training, causing physical and psychological damage. This exploitation and abuse exacerbate the stress and discomfort they experience for the rest of their lives while living in unsuitable conditions at entertainment venues. All solely for commercial gain.

Review current offers first

Before drafting an animal welfare policy it's recommended that an initial review of the products and experiences involving (wild) animals is undertaken. The following questions can help when reviewing animal related products.

- Are wild animals required to perform in shows? E.g., orangutans who re-enact kick-boxing matches, elephants and dolphins who perform tricks.
- Are visitors allowed to hold, touch or directly interact with wild animals? E.g., tiger (cub) selfies, walking with lions, riding an elephant or swim-with-dolphin experiences.

If the answer is "yes" to one or both of these questions, these activities have negative impacts on animal welfare and should not be allowed.

A robust animal welfare policy consists of two parts.

- Your company's mission and values in relation to animal welfare. These will not have an immediate impact on the animals in your company's supply chain, but they serve as a frame of reference and a way to put forward principles that will accompany the organisation wherever and whatever business is done.
- Your company's commitment sets out guidelines in which your mission and values are translated into concrete practices, outlining what's acceptable and what's not

Essential animal welfare principles to recognise

- That the travel industry plays a key role in steering demand away from cruel wildlife experiences, encouraging improving conditions for existing captive wild animals and asking suppliers to end commercial breeding and trade to ensure this is the last generation of captive wildlife used for entertainment.
- That all animals must be respected for their intrinsic value and that the best way to experience animals whilst on holiday is by seeing them in the wild.
- That when under human care animals must have a good life by enjoying good physical and mental health. That they should be provided with an environment and conditions that prevent suffering, and also enable positive experiences, with the ability to make choices and express the widest possible range of natural behaviours.
- That the unique needs of wild animals in particular can never be fully met in captive environments. That where wild animals are kept in captive conditions they must be provided with the best possible welfare and not be held captive for entertainment purposes.
- That your company will only work with suppliers if the animals under their care have the highest possible welfare in line with the Five Domains of Animal Welfare:
 1. Nutrition – factors that involve the animal's access to sufficient, balanced, varied and clean food and water.
 2. Environment – factors that enable comfort through temperature, substrate, space, air, odour, noise and predictability.
 3. Health – factors that enable good health through absence of disease, injury, impairment and good fitness level.
 4. Behaviour – factors that provide varied, novel and engaging environmental challenges through sensory inputs, exploration, foraging, bonding, playing, retreating and others.
 5. Mental State – by presenting positive situations in the previous four functional domains, the mental state of the animal should benefit from predominantly positive states, such as pleasure, comfort or vitality, while reducing negative states such as fear, frustration, hunger, pain or boredom.

Essential guidelines outlining what and what not to offer

It's recommended that travel companies develop as part of an animal welfare policy, clear guidelines that set out acceptable and unacceptable activities.

We recommend to not sell or promote venues and/or activities that offer tourists any of the following experiences:

- close interaction with wild animals, such as touching or riding, including but not limited to elephant riding and bathing, swimming with dolphins or walking with lion
- watching wild animal performances, including but not limited to dolphin shows, circuses, orangutan boxing
- photo opportunities with wild animals, including, but not limited to big cats, sloths, or primates, tiger selfies, dolphin kissing, or selfies with orangutans
- watching animals fight or race, or being used in other sports or cultural events that cause animals to suffer or die, including but not limited to bullfighting and running, crocodile wrestling, dog fighting, rodeos, elephant polo and horse or dog racing
- visiting facilities where captive wild animals are bred and kept for commercial products, including but not limited to crocodile farms, civet coffee farms, bear bile farms, turtle farms
- consuming food that has caused extreme animal suffering and/or that threatens the survival of species in the wild, including bush meat, foie gras, tiger wine, bear bile, shark fin, whale meat, turtle meat, snake blood and civet coffee (kopi Luwak)
- buying souvenirs made from wild animal parts, such as bags made out of crocodile or snakeskin, jewellery made out coral, ivory, tortoise shells
- engaging in any form of hunting, including trophy and canned hunting or sport fishing
- When not in conflict with any of the above guidelines, the following venues, and activities where tourists can experience animals can be offered and/or promoted:
 - Genuine wildlife sanctuaries, rehabilitation facilities and rescue centres that have the highest possible standards of animal care and where there is no breeding for commercial purposes – e.g., sanctuaries certified by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) or elephant venues following World Animal Protection's Elephant-Friendly venue guidelines. For further guidance on how to recognise a genuine wildlife sanctuary, see World Animal Protection's checklist.
 - Responsible wildlife watching where tourists observe animals in their natural environment from a safe and respectful distance without luring or chasing them or in other ways interrupting their natural behaviours or routines – e.g., whale watching operators and destinations (Whale Heritage Sites) certified by the World Cetacean Alliance (WCA).

Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

For your company's animal welfare policy to be fully implemented across your organisation we encourage you to set clear objectives with timebound targets so progress can be monitored and reported.

As part of implementing the policy your company should ensure suppliers understand the policy, how they can guarantee compliance and what the processes are for when they don't.

Awareness raising through education is another essential part of ensuring the policy becomes fully entrenched into your daily business operation. Training and checklists can be provided to staff and suppliers, and customers too should be empowered to recognise and report on good and bad animal practices.

Last but not least, we strongly recommend you evaluate your company's animal welfare policy on a regular basis to allow for updates and improvements based on the latest research, evidence, and expertise.

Appendix 3

Ready-to-go animal welfare policy template

[Company name]'s Animal Welfare Policy

[Company name] is committed to responsible tourism and protecting animals who are impacted by the travel industry. We have developed this animal welfare policy as animal encounters have become increasingly popular as part of people's holiday experiences.

However, some animal related activities, such as elephant rides, photo opportunities with tigers or watching dolphins perform, lead to suffering through cruel treatment and inhumane conditions.

[Company name] believes that all animals should be respected for their intrinsic value and that the best way to experience animals whilst on holiday is by seeing them in the wild. When under human care, both domesticated and non-domesticated (wild) animals, must have 'a good life' by enjoying good physical and mental health. The conditions they are provided must favour positive experiences over negative ones within an environment that encourages making choices and enables them to express the widest possible range of natural behaviours.

[Company name] only works with suppliers if the animals under their care are provided with the highest possible welfare in line with the Five Domains of animal welfare:

1. **Nutrition** - factors that involve the animal's access to sufficient, balanced, varied and clean food and water.
2. **Environment** - factors that enable comfort through temperature, substrate, space, air, odour, noise and predictability.
3. **Health** - factors that enable good health through absence of disease, injury, impairment and good fitness level.
4. **Behaviour** - factors that provide varied, novel and engaging environmental challenges through sensory inputs, exploration, foraging, bonding, playing, retreating and others.
5. **Mental state** - by presenting positive situations in the previous four functional domains, the mental state of the animal should benefit from predominantly positive states, such as pleasure, comfort, or vitality, while reducing negative states such as fear, frustration, hunger, pain or boredom.

[Company name] also recognises that the needs of wild animals can never be fully met in captivity. Where wild animals are kept in captivity the facility must not only provide them with best possible welfare conditions, but it must also contribute towards a shift away from exploitative practices and be supportive of phasing out keeping wild animals for commercial purposes.

Our guidelines

At [Company name], we do not sell or promote venues and/or activities that offer tourists any of the following experiences.

- Close interaction with wild animals, such as, touching or riding, including but not limited to elephant riding and bathing, swimming with dolphins or walking with lions.
- Watching wild animal performances, including but not limited to dolphin shows, circuses, orangutan boxing.
- Photo opportunities with wild animals, including, but not limited to big cats, sloths, or primates, tiger selfies, dolphin kissing, or selfies with orangutans.
- Watching animals fight or race or being used in other sport or cultural events that cause animals to suffer or die, including but not limited to bullfighting and running, crocodile wrestling, dog fighting, rodeo, elephant polo and horse racing.
- Visiting facilities where captive wild animals are bred and kept for commercial products, including but not limited to crocodile farms, civet coffee farms, bear bile farms, turtle farms.
- Engaging in trophy, canned hunting, or sport fishing.

When not in conflict with any of the above guidelines [Company name] does offer and/or promotes the following venues and activities where tourists can experience animals.

- Genuine animal sanctuaries, rehabilitation facilities and rescue centres that have the highest possible standards of animal care – e.g., sanctuaries certified by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) or elephant venues following World Animal Protection’s
- Elephant-Friendly venue guidelines. For further guidance on how to recognise a genuine wildlife sanctuary, see World Animal Protection’s checklist.
- Responsible, wildlife watching where a visitor can observe animals in their natural environment from a suitable distance without interrupting their natural behaviours or disturbing their routines – e.g., whale watching experiences certified by the World Cetacean Alliance (WCA).

