

Dolphinarium Essay Competition
3rd Place - Secondary School



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I strongly disagree with the proposed plans for a dolphinarium in Saint Lucia. I believe that dolphins should be free and in the wild living their best possible life. Here are some reasons for my stance on the matter.

Dolphins are creatures that are naturally designed to be in the wild and not in captivity. Dolphins in captivity are most times taken from the wild and are separated from their pod. This can be both psychologically and emotionally detrimental to them as they are very closely connected with the members of their pod. No facility can simulate the vast expanse of ocean that dolphins have at their disposal out in the wild and therefore cannot adequately supply their needs. The water that they are placed in is filled with chemicals and bacteria that brings about blindness and many other skin diseases amongst them. The dolphins make use of echolocation to find their pod and when this is done in the pool or glass box that they are in, the sound bounces off the walls and is like an amplified shriek to them. It is like a human blindfolded in a jail cell. Dolphins in captivity in most instances tend not to get along with their tank-mates as they are forced to live with them. Dolphins in captivity suffer from boredom, as a result of the confined space that they are in. Pneumonia, ulcers and stress-related diseases also come about as a result of the conditions that they are placed under.

Contrary to common belief, the 'educational dolphin shows' that spectators flock to usually don't focus on the welfare of dolphins but more on the shows that they put on. Dolphins are abused when they are trained for those shows and are rewarded with dead fish. Multiple studies across America have shown that before and after dolphins are released from captivity refuse to eat live fish. This also is a hindrance on their natural instincts and hunting skills as everything is awarded to them.

The dolphinarim's plans fall short of having a properly laid out training procedure on how to properly train their workers. This could lead to a truck-load of problems. Trainers might be susceptible to injury and possibly death and the same goes for the dolphins. Another possibility is that the dolphins are mistreated due to the lack of training provided or lack of passion for the profession.

These are the reasons why I disagree with the dolphinarium notion. I stand firmly in my decision that dolphins should not be held in captivity. Let us not be on the wrong side of history.