

Wednesday, 13 January, 2016

To: The Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment
& Communications
Parliament House
Canberra ACT

Re: Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Prohibition of Live Imports of Primates for Research) Bill 2015

This is the first time I have ever made a submission and I am writing it in Wordpad (my only Word software) so I hope you can open it and thank you for reading it if you can open it.

As you know, the world of live animal experimentation, for any reason at all, is an ethical and moral minefield.

The ethical issue of overcoming human disease and suffering by imposing ongoing equal or higher suffering upon wild and captive animals (including discarded pets and purpose bred animals, eg, dogs, horses etc) is, to me however, straightforward. It should not happen.

Regarding and in support of the above amendment, I would like to know:

Why is it necessary to import primates for medical research in Australia, which already has captive breeding programmes for its research?

What is the justification for imposing this highly stressful and traumatic capture and importation in addition to the painful, horrific, ongoing suffering experienced by these animals – especially when technology enables scientists to research diseases in other more ethical and 'humane' ways? (We humans seem to be specialists in imposing suffering on our own species as well as on animals and we always seem to be able to justify the unjustifiable).

How is this importation of primates impacting on animal numbers in the exporting countries that are already under stress environmentally from ongoing human-initiated de-forestation and animal capture for other reasons, eg, the Chinese obsession with animal parts for their own supposed advantage? Are we any further advanced ethically than the Chinese and Japanese nations?
The answer to this question would have to be one of semantics....

What message is this situation sending to these two nations in particular, and every other country, regarding Australia's stance on conservation and animal research?
Japan must be laughing its head off.

I would plea with you to do all you can to stop, once and for all, the importation of primates for medical or any other research.