

11th January 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you with my deepest concerns regarding the importation and use of primates in Australia for research.

To allow this horrendous trade in such highly intelligent, sensitive creatures is inhumane and unacceptable in our day and age. Transportation over long distances is, in itself, highly stressful for any animal, but to do so with the purpose of subjecting these primates to experiments and place them in inappropriate environments makes the whole process even more abhorrent.

There is also evidence that allowing primates to be imported to Australia may be contributing to the illegal trade in wild-caught primates. The British Union Against Vivisection demonstrated that wild-caught pigtail macaques on Tinjil Island in Indonesia (the same source of macaques for import to Australia) were being incorrectly classified as "born in captivity." This is another reason why it is imperative that the importation of primates for use in research is banned in Australia.

Along with these issues, there is also a growing body of evidence which strongly indicates using animals for research is scientifically questionable. Due to differences in physiology, anatomy, genetics and biochemistry, extrapolating results from animals to humans is often unreliable, misleading and sometimes dangerous. It doesn't matter whether this issue is examined from an ethical and/or a scientific perspective, it is clear we need to invest in safer, non-animal alternatives for credible research to take place in future.

I urge you to address this issue and to adopt a progressive attitude by supporting a ban on primate importation and research in Australia. I believe your support for such a ban would be most welcomed by the community.