

# ANIMAL SPIRIT

*The Magazine of the Animal Interfaith Alliance*

*Faiths Working Together for Animals*

*Issue 13 - Autumn 2020*

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# Animal Spirit Magazine

Previous editions of  
*Animal Spirit* can  
be found on the  
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## Message from AIA President

*Dr Richard Ryder*



Once again we are faced with a myriad of animal cruelty issues on a **global scale** - the failure of the Agriculture Bill to protect farm animals in the UK; the fur farms in Europe that threaten to spread a mutant version of Covid -19; the appalling cruelty enacted on elephants in many arenas; the terrible conditions for farm animals being exported alive from Australia to the Middle East; and the misguided use of animals in science. I am so proud that AIA is actively campaigning on all of these issues - look at Marian Hussenbux's wonderful work!

Please keep writing to your representative and those in power e.g. *your MP*, the Secretary-General of *the United Nations*, the *European Parliament*, the *Presidents of the U.S.* or Brazil. Write to Prime Ministers, Secretaries of State, Shadow Ministers and Special Advisers. Thank them when they do something positive for animals. Also write to the local, national or international media. Animals are citizens too! *Keep up the good work! Richard*

## Please Help AIA Support Animals

AIA is a unique alliance of organisations which represent all the major faiths. Not only is it the only organisation to speak out on the moral treatment of animals by drawing on the combined wisdom of all the faiths, but it also promotes social harmony by bringing the faith groups together on an issue for which they all share a concern. Such cooperation between the faiths is what politicians are encouraging and, as such, they are listening to AIA.

*Therefore AIA is in a uniquely strong position to campaign for animals.*

**However, in order to continue campaigning for animals AIA needs funds.** Please make any donation you can by visiting our [website](#) and donating via [PayPal](#) or by completing the 'Friend' form on the back page and sending a cheque. Your support is very much appreciated.

## Please Make a Donation

## About the Animal Interfaith Alliance

### People

#### The Team

**Barbara Gardner** - Founder & CE

**Marian Hussenbux** - International Campaigns Secretary

**Sheila Thomas** - Membership Secretary

#### Presidents, Patrons & Advisors

**President:** - Dr Richard Ryder

**Vice-President:** - Dr Deborah Jones

#### Patrons:

Kay, Duchess of Hamilton

Rev. Christa Blanke (*Christian*)

Joyce D'Silva (*Ambassador CIWF*)

Satish Kumar (*Jain*)

Nitin Mehta MBE (*Jain*)

Dr André Menache (*Jewish*)

Dr Alpesh Patel (*Hindu*)

Dr Matthieu Ricard (*Buddhist*)

Anant Shah OBE (*Jain*)

Muhammad Safa (*Muslim*)

Ajit & Charanjit Singh MBE (*Sikh*)

#### Advisors:

**Cultural & Diversity** - Dr Atul Shah

**Legal** - David Thomas

**Scientific** - Dr André Menache

#### Directors

**Rev. Feargus O'Connor** - Chair

(Unitarian Minister, Secretary - World Congress of Faiths)

**Chris Fegan** - Deputy Chair

(Catholic Concern for Animals Chief Executive)

**Sarah Dunning** (Catholic Concern for Animals trustee)

**Rev. Prof. Martin Henig** (Vice

President - Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals)

**Dr Christina Nellist** (Founder of Pan-Orthodox Concern for Animals)

**Keval Shah** (Jain Vegans)

**Judith Wilkings** (Quaker Concern for Animals)

### Member Organisations

Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals (ASWA)

Animals in Islam

The Bhagvatinandji Education & Health Trust

Catholic Concern for Animals (CCA)

Christian Vegetarians & Vegans UK

Christian Vegetarian Association (CVA US)

Dharma Voices for Animals (DVA) (Buddhist)

Institute of Jainology (IOJ)

International Ahimsa Organisation

The Jewish Vegetarian Society (JVS)

The Mahavir Trust

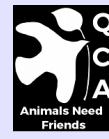
Oshwal Association of the UK (OAUK)

Pan-Orthodox Concern for Animals

Quaker Concern for Animals (QCA)

Sadhu Vaswani Centre (Hindu)

The Young Jains



### Vision

A peaceful world where people of all faiths and none work together to treat all animals with respect and compassion.

### Mission

To create a united voice for animals from all of the world's faiths and spiritual beliefs, based on their founders' teachings, to bring about the humane treatment of animals.

[www-animal-interfaith-alliance.com](http://www-animal-interfaith-alliance.com)

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## Welcome and News from the Chief Executive

*Barbara Gardner*

### Greetings,

#### Welcome to the autumn 2020 edition of Animal Spirit.

In the previous edition, in spring 2020, we were just becoming aware that the Covid-19 virus, which had originated in a wildlife market in Wuhan in China, was becoming a global pandemic, and our leading article asked the question "When we will heed nature's warnings?". We looked at the missed lessons of the past, from the plague of 1347-1351 and the influenza pandemic of 1918, through to the many recent epidemics such as MERS, SARS, Swine flu and Avian flu. We predicted, along with other organisations such as CIWF, that factory farms could be the breeding grounds for the next pandemic, as they contained all the conditions necessary for producing mutating viruses.

Now we see a mutant version of the Covid-19 virus emerging in the fur farms of Europe, resulting in the tragic culling of millions of individual sentient creatures. Not only is this a tragedy on an enormous scale for the animals concerned, but the stupidity of humanity's failure to learn the lessons of the wildlife markets in China beggars belief. Just as scientists are developing vaccines for the original Covid-19 virus, we create another version which might just send us all the way back to the drawing board, with all the sickness, death, economic hardship and inconvenience it causes. AIA has, of course, been writing letters to the authorities involved.

A related issue is how we use animals in testing when searching for a vaccine and we question the efficacy of the outdated animal model (which only requires a 10% success rate to be approved) compared to using the 21st century alternative technologies (which require a 90% success rate to be approved). Our Patron Dr Andre Menache presented a webinar on this subject for AIA in the summer and will present a further webinar on the issue at AIA's AGM on 12th December, which I would be delighted for you to attend. He also writes about this subject in this issue.



**You are Invited to**

### **A Webinar by Dr Andre Menache**

*Timeline and Milestones in the Antivivisection Movement since 1980*

### **Followed by the 5<sup>th</sup> AIA AGM**

**To be held by Zoom**

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2020**  
**Webinar 2.00pm and AGM 3.00pm**

*Everyone is welcome to attend the webinar but please note that only members and member organisations can attend the AGM and vote.*

Please advise whether you will be attending the Webinar and/or the AGM by contacting Barbara Gardner at [Barbgard.aia@gmail.com](mailto:Barbgard.aia@gmail.com) and you will be sent links to each.

## News

### **Animal Advocacy**

Led by AIA's International Campaigns Secretary, Marian Hussenbux, AIA continues to campaign globally on animal welfare issues. Our latest campaigning work, for the period March 2020 to November 2020, can be read in this issue of Animal Spirit [here](#). All the previous campaign reports from Marian can be read on the [Advocacy section](#) of the AIA website.

### **AIA President writes on behalf of AIA**

AIA's President, Dr Richard Ryder has written to US President Elect, Joe Biden and his deputy Kamala Harris to congratulate them on their election, introduce AIA to them and ask them to advocate for animals.

He has also written to Boris Johnson, calling on him to legislate to protect all current UK farm animal welfare standards.

### AIA Webinar by Dr Andre Menache

On 15th July, AIA hosted a webinar by Dr Andre Menache on 'What Lessons Can be Learned from the Corona Virus Pandemic?' which explored why 21st century models must replace animal models if we are to obtain a fast and effective vaccine. This far-sighted and thought-provoking webinar can be viewed [here](#).

Dr Andre Menache, a patron of AIA, will be the guest speaker at AIA's AGM on 12th December where he will be hosting a second webinar at 2.00pm entitled *Timeline and Milestones in the Antivivisection Movement since 1980*. All are welcome to attend the webinar. Please see [the advert](#) for the joining details.

### Pan-Orthodox Concern for Animals - Book

Co-founder, Dr Christina Nellist, is editing a new book titled *Climate Crisis and Creation Care: Eco-Economic Sustainability, Ecological Integrity and Justice*. Details are [here](#). AIA will be contributing a chapter.

### Catholic Concern for Animals - Fish Project

AIA is supporting CCA's Fish Project. Further details are [here](#).

### International Ahimsa Organisation

AIA are delighted to welcome their latest new member organisation, the *International Ahimsa Organisation*, who are based in India and are dedicated to promoting compassion to animals. This brings AIA's member organisations to 17.

### UN responds to AIA's letter on pandemics

On 9th April 2020, AIA wrote to the United Nations, calling on them to take decisive action to prevent further pandemics. The letter, addressed to Antonio Guterres, the Secretary General, can be read [here](#). AIA received a very positive response.

### Coalition to End the Global Wildlife Trade

AIA joined the coalition of animal welfare organisations, co-ordinated by [World Animal Protection](#) (WAP), to campaign to end the wildlife trade. Further details are [here](#). Please sign [the petition](#).

### Save the Asian Elephant (STAE)

AIA is supporting the *Save the Asian Elephant* campaign to call on the UK government to legislate to ban UK companies from promoting the brutally cruel Asian elephant tourist resorts and attractions, and have joined their social media campaign. Further details [here](#).

### Religious Education in the UK

We are delighted to be working with [RE Today](#), the organisation which produces material for religious education syllabuses in the UK, on promoting the role of animals within all the faiths and also ethical veganism. *RE Today* is committed to the teaching of the major world faiths and also non-religious worldviews in Religious Education, and to an accurate and fair representation of their beliefs, values and practices in all of their teaching materials. They work in the UK and internationally to give children a broad and balanced education to support them in the world they live in, through the teaching of high-quality RE in schools. They support teachers in all types of schools: primary, secondary, middle, first, independent, through academies, free, grammar, community, MATs, schools with a religious character and more. Further details can be found on their [website](#).

AIA is helping in the production of teaching materials on ethical veganism and is writing an article on 'Justice for Animals: the extension of the Golden Rule beyond human beings to other animals' and religious approaches to this for an edition of *RE Today* devoted to Justice. There will also be a link to the AIA website in the *RE Today* resources.



### Continuing our work

If you feel that AIA is achieving valuable results for animals and you want us to continue to do so, please support us with a kind donation.

## Please Make a Donation

## AIA's Advocacy Activity - March 2020 to November 2020

*Marian Hussenbux - International Campaigns Secretary*



**UK Agriculture Bill still not providing protection to UK animal welfare**

**During the period March 2020 to November 2020, AIA sent out 64 letters across the globe as part of its animal advocacy work.** So far we have received 25 replies – some bodies take longer to reply than others.



### United Kingdom

UK-wise, we seem to be somewhat in the doldrums.

#### **The Agriculture Bill**

This has been signed, but many are not convinced that trade with the US will not lead to our having to accept meat products raised to a much lower welfare standard than we have in the UK. Here is the government text:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landmark-agriculture-bill-becomes-law>

and here is some comment by Sustain:

<https://www.sustainweb.org/blogs/nov20-new-agriculture-act2020/>

Conservative MP Neil Hudson is the only vet in the House of Commons and, true to his vocation, was one of the small group of only

22 Conservative MPs who had voted in favour of amendments to the Bill as it originally was. We wrote to thank him.

#### **The Sentience Bill**

Formal acknowledgment of the sentience of our fellow beings is still lacking. Hopefully, there will be news on this vital issue before the end of the transition period.

#### **Badgers**

We wrote to the *British Veterinary Association*, which has not opposed the government-instigated slaughter, confining themselves to objecting to free-shooting. Our patron and scientific advisor, Dr. André Menache, gave invaluable help in writing our letter; he is one of the group of veterinarians and conservationists who have written to the government against the slaughter.

#### **Driven Grouse Shooting & Heather Burning**

We wrote to Minister George Eustice to ask him to stop the burning of heather on the peat lands, done to help the proponents of Driven Grouse Shooting to shoot more birds. As well as damaging rare and vital peat bogs, this makes rivers flow swifter down from the hills and cause floods below, and of course it kills animals, ground nesting birds, reptiles and plants. It is a complete disaster.



*Beavers — persecuted in Scotland*

## Scotland

Much is happening in Scotland.

### Badgers and Beavers

There was no further protection for badgers and their setts, or for beavers, who, bizarrely, soon after they received legal protection, are now being killed under licence by land owners who do not appreciate their engineering work. 87 were killed in 2019, and the season re-opened on August 17.

### Otters

The Otter Champion in the Scots government is Finance Minister Kate Forbes, whom we thanked for her support for this species. She replied with a full explanation of her work for the animals.

### Seals

Other good legislation agreed includes a ban on the killing of seals who take salmon from the aquaculture farms, against which we have previously lobbied.

### Mountain Hares

The Green MSP Alison Johnstone had tabled a bill to have the mass killing of mountain hares stopped – she is the Hare Champion in the Scottish Parliament. We thanked her and the minister for their work to get this through Parliament – though hares will still be killed under licence.

Shooters made it clear they were intending to step up the killing before protection came into force. The open season begins annually on August 1. We asked Minister Mairi Gougeon not to delay legislation, but Alison Johnstone MSP stated on August 1:

(Achieving protection for the hare) *"was an important victory in its own right and also because it's the first time that decisive action has been taken against wildlife persecution on Scotland's grouse moors."*

*Sadly, however, the Scottish Government has yet to deliver this protection. The open season is due to start again and killing mountain hares without licence can commence once more from today."*

We wrote again to the Minister to ask for this protection to be given urgently before more hares are killed. We received a reply stating: "The Scottish Government is giving careful thought to how the licensing arrangements for mountain hares will work and when the new protected species status will come into force..."

As for pre-emptive culling: "... we expect all landowners to act responsibly and with restraint during the period following 1 August 2020... the Scottish Government will be following the situation carefully for any indications of attempts to carry out excessive culls and we will consider taking action to curtail this activity at any point if it is believed that it is necessary to do so."

We wonder whether Voluntary Restraint, a favourite device of governments, has ever worked.



**Scottish Wildcat**  
- only 35 left

### **The Scottish Wild Cat**

This is the rarest feline in the world. Despite that, the government does not appear to be taking seriously the risk of the species' functional extinction as logging is being permitted in one of their main habitats in Clashindarroch forest, Aberdeenshire. We wrote in response to the organisation *Wildcat Haven's* campaign to save the cats, which included lodging a complaint with the Bern Convention.

*"The Bern Convention is a binding international legal instrument in the field of nature conservation, covering most of the natural heritage of the European continent and extending to some States of Africa.*

*It is the only regional Convention of its kind worldwide, and aims to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, as well as to promote European co-operation in this field. The treaty also takes account of the impact that other policies may have on natural heritage and recognises the intrinsic value of wild flora and fauna, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations.*

*Fifty countries and the European Union have already signed up to the Convention..."*

The Mammal Society completed a 'red list' of all mammals in the UK. They have confirmed that the Scottish wildcat is now classed as Critically Endangered, meaning that it is at imminent risk of extinction. It is estimated there are only 35 left.

The following organisation campaigns to make neutering and microchipping of domestic cats mandatory in Scotland. Not only will this reduce numbers and potential neglect causing suffering, but it will help the wild cats, as they can breed with domestic cats and the 'pure' strain will die out. Please see:

<https://catsliberation.wordpress.com>

Also: [www.wildcathaven.com](http://www.wildcathaven.com)

### **Update from Wildcat Haven on 26 Aug:**

"Our legal team have been in regular correspondence with the relevant people at the Bern Convention and yesterday, we were informed that a hearing about the complaints we made is scheduled for the 15-16th September. The Bureau of the Standing Committee will consider the complaint and the response of the authorities in Strasbourg."

We wrote again to the First Minister, asking her to list the Clashindarroch Forest Aberdeenshire as protected, thus preserving the cats' main habitat.

### **Traps and Snares**

The Scottish Parliament voted to extend vicarious liability to offences involving traps and snares – the campaign for a full ban continues.

### **Choke Collars on Dogs**

There will be a review of the use of choke collars on dogs.



**Scottish government ends live calf exports after losing legal battle with CIWF**

### Live Exports

The Scottish government had been unwilling to take action to ban the export of live animals post-Brexit, though the UK government has promised a ban on exports for slaughter and – we hope – further fattening.

We wrote to Minister Fergus Ewing to point out that the UK proposal (if it happens) would not affect the ability of farmers on the islands to sell their livestock within the UK, nor would it prevent businesses selling meat products outside of the UK, which we understand is the chief concern in Scotland.

**Positive Update:** in September, CIWF reported: “after a gruelling legal battle, the Scottish Government has finally stopped live calf exports. Having spent six months defending the inhumane export of unweaned calves to Europe, they have conceded that this trade was being conducted in breach of the legislation on the protection of animals during transport.”

### Empathy Training

An amendment asking the courts to consider a restorative justice process or rehabilitation programme was not passed, as the Minister prefers a non-legislative route, but she announced that the Government is going to commission research into empathy training and related approaches.

### Protection for Decapod Crustaceans and Cephalopods

We appealed for this to be added to *the Animals and Wildlife (Penalties, Protections & Powers) (Scotland) Bill* and an amendment was tabled.

### White-tailed Sea Eagle

Finally for Scottish affairs, a furore arose in late July when a juvenile satellite-tagged White-tailed Sea Eagle was found poisoned on a grouse moor – we joined very many organisations and individuals in complaining to the First Minister.

### Wales

We wrote to the Pembroke Coast Park Authority about an individual’s long term trapping and killing of foxes for fur. They explained in their reply that the Authority is not able to take action as the vast majority of the Park is privately owned; on the 2% which is their responsibility, the laying of snares is strictly prohibited. The police were informed of this man’s activities.

### British Sovereign Base Areas (SBA) in Cyprus

In 2017, we had written to thank the British Sovereign Base Areas (SBA) in Cyprus for their effective action against the illegal killing of birds on their land - including many prosecutions with fines imposed, major net clearance and seizures of mist nets and limesticks. Non-native acacia, on which the poachers hung their nets, was also removed from the Special Area of Conservation at Cape Pyla.

Now, the SBA are considering allowing some development on their land in the Akrotiri Peninsula (a Photovoltaic Park for clean energy) which could pose a risk to the environment, so we have asked the SBA to ensure that the final Policy Statement is in keeping with the area’s protection status, by rejecting proposals with negative environmental impacts and which would lead to loss of valuable habitat. We had a very detailed reply from the SBA stressing, inter alia:

“More than 50% of the SBA territory is designated as a Special Protection Area and /or Special Area of Conservation. We are strongly committed to protecting these areas and we will ensure that any development approved within or near these sites will not compromise in any way their conservation status. ... we are striving to improve enforcement strategies with a view to minimising environmental crime and this has yielded tangible results over the last two years....”



## Europe

***Fur Producing European Countries create mutant form of Covid-19 - millions of mink culled.***

### Denmark

Denmark is the biggest producer of mink fur in the world. As 207 of the 1,139 farms showed infection by a mutating form of Covid 19, 17 million animals are being killed by carbon monoxide. As this will have wiped out the industry, we asked the PM not to restart it, for ethical and indeed rational health issues.

### Sweden

We decided also to write to the Swedish minister, asking her, in view of the appalling prospect of the same happening in her country, and as fur farming is inherently cruel everywhere, to ban the industry.

### Norway

We complained to Norwegian Fisheries on the killing of seals for the fur trade. To make matters even worse, because of Covid there was no animal welfare officer (so-named) on board.

### Poland

On this subject, good news from Poland: there is a huge fur farm in the country, where the

usual horrific cruelty to the animals is allowed to happen. We wrote to the Polish Ambassador in London.

Even as we wrote, the news came that their lower House, the Sejm, had voted 77% in favour of the proposed Bill *Five for Animals*, which includes a ban on fur farming. It will now go the Senate and hopefully to the President for signing.

We received a full and positive reply from the Embassy to this effect.

### Greece

In Greece, the airport in Elliniko-Argyroupoli was to be demolished: we appealed to two developers to allow feral cats to be rescued and other creatures such as hedgehogs to escape.

On a positive note, we thanked the Greek Minister of Agriculture for the decision taken to treat cruelty to animals as a crime and greatly increase the penalties available to the law when prosecuting malefactors. This will surely have some deterrent effect and ensure that the public is aware that animals and their welfare are fully valued by the government, so, where necessary, public attitudes will also evolve.

However our gratitude is tempered with reservations, as the minister has offered a €3,000,000 subsidy to the fur trades.



*Irish Hare Coursing continues*

## Ireland

### Hare Coursing

Our main concern was not surprisingly hare coursing. The deadly RHD2 virus killing rabbits and hares, which has resurfaced, seemed to be ignored by government. We wrote yet again to the Irish political parties to ask for a ban on coursing.

We also wrote to all TDs (Irish MPs) asking for a ban on hunting to be included in negotiations for the new government. We had positive replies from the Greens, the Social Democrats, Solidarity, Independents 4 Change and one Fianna Fáil TD. The Labour Party will 'consider a ban', but one Fine Gael minister replied showing no interest.

In July, a new government was formed and the Green TD Michael Noonan was made Minister of State for Heritage, which has responsibility for such issues as hare coursing. We asked him not to renew the licence. He replied by explaining the functions and responsibilities of his role and saying that there was no all-party appetite to ban coursing. This is the reality of government – what one says out of office can be unlike what one can do in office.

We wrote to all the Green TDs complaining about this potential volte face on an important aspect of Green Party policy and repeated our request for a refusal of the licence, citing the **Bern Convention** (see above, Scotland) as a body with which wiping out the hare population would surely be in non-compliance.

TD Paul Murphy presented a bill in the Dáil to ban coursing. We wrote to all TDs in support. Once again, because of strong support of coursing by Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil TDs, that failed.

Darragh O'Brien issued the licence. However, events overtook the coursers and coursing was suspended due to Covid. This would have been a small cause for celebration, but the hares who had been netted for the events were still in captivity. We asked the minister to release them under supervision where they had been caught.

**Update November:** the hares have been released.

Unlicensed hare coursing was also carried out with impunity on Whiddy Island in Bantry Bay. We wrote to the National Parks and Wildlife Service – copy to Ministers – to ask them to stop this, which, as it is completely unmonitored, is even crueller than the legal version. Terriers as well as greyhounds are used and they are also treated callously.

### Ashton Dog Pound

The Ashton Dog Pound in Dublin was reported for instances of mistreatment, no veterinary care, improper destruction of dogs, and poor staff training. We received a reply to our request to Dublin County Council to investigate and close the place down if needed, saying that their enquiry is not yet ready to be made public, but some unspecified recommendations in the review have been made.



### Programme for Government in Ireland

Readers will notice the omission of a ban on blood sports, which the Greens, now in government, tried very hard to achieve, but these are the animal welfare elements of the Programme.

Joe O'Brien, TD for Dublin Fingal and Minister of State for Community Development and Charities, informed us: "While it is not possible to transpose all our policies into a programme for government here are some of the commitments we got in this programme:

We will:

- Ensure the continued robust enforcement of the Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013 and review the sentencing regime underpinning the legislation.
- Immediately prioritise the drafting of legislation for the phasing out of fur-farming, publishing legislation in this area as soon as possible.
- Ensure robust and consistent enforcement of the Dog Breeding Establishments Act.
- Support a doubling of the ex-gratia funding for animal welfare organisations within two years.
- Promote responsible pet ownership.
- Extend the badger vaccination programme nationwide and end badger culling as soon as possible, consistent with the best scientific and veterinary advice.
- Regulate the breeding, ownership, sale, or supply of exotic species.
- Prioritise equine welfare, based on a robust traceability system, building on existing inspectorate supports across the country and ensuring a consistent approach to dealing with horse-welfare issues across local authorities.
- Develop additional urban horse-welfare programmes, working with local authorities,

charities, and community stakeholders to provide stabling facilities and educational programmes."

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### Greyhound Racing

In terms of the Greyhound industry this is the commitment, which was not all we wanted, but better than it would have been had we not been at the table:

Future funding of the greyhound sector from the Horse and Greyhound Fund is contingent on a guarantee of welfare standards being upheld on an annual basis. We will ensure that strict monitoring takes place of this sector, to guarantee that the animal welfare commitments made to date are fully implemented. We will insist that funds committed to investment in greyhound welfare and that rehoming programmes are delivered. We will fully implement the Greyhound Racing Act 2019, strengthening integrity in the industry and providing for a new system of traceability.



*French Coypus*

## France

### Fur Farm

The fur farm in Eure-et-Loir is so appalling that it has been criticised even by the Fur Federation. We asked the Prefect why the facility has not been closed.

### Equines Cruelty

There were complaints made of ill treatment of equines at the *Foire des Chevaux*, in Cantal. We asked for closer invigilation of the fair and hoped that police would be involved if this was repeated. We received a prompt reply from the Mayor, saying the matter was under review, and behaviour at the fair would be monitored.

### Bullfighting

Bullfighting in Vergèze, Gard: the corrida was brought to an end in that town after an accident last year. We thanked the mayor.

### Brigade for Animal Protection

A hopeful sign is that a *Brigade for Animal Protection*, capable of acting rapidly in cases of ill treatment of animals, was proposed by Corinne Vignon, the animal-friendly deputy for Haute Garonne. She tabled a bill which, if accepted and implemented in her department, could be a model for other parts of France. A police captain in Toulouse already leads a group which is responding almost daily to cruelty reports.

### Glue Sticks for Bird Hunting

In September came the good news that the extremely cruel hunting practice of catching birds with glue sticks would be suspended for a year – we join One Voice in hoping this will become permanent – and also that the very rare turtledoves will not be hunted in future.

### Coypus

Coypus were under threat in Sucy-en-Brie. The mayor was open to the non-lethal response, so we wrote to encourage him.

### Street Cats

Finally for France, and particularly important as it pertains to all parts of the country – the treatment of street cats.

We discovered via the excellent organisation *One Voice (OV)* that mayors of communes in France have a duty of care for such cats. This dates back to 2015.

OV provided us with their document *Fiche Errance* on this legal obligation with which all mayors do not, of course, comply.

We wrote to the mayor of Bourg-en-Bresse who was not allowing the feeding and care of street cats in his commune.

We think this document will prove to be very useful for us when this problem arises in future. By the way, our scientific advisor and patron, Dr. André Menache, is also a scientific consultant to *One Voice*.



## **Africa**

### **Tunisia**

A British-run rescue in Djerba was raided in July and many dogs and pups cruelly killed. The local people were frightened to go to the beach as the dogs were numerous, and the owner did not appear to have a neutering policy. So anger had built up and when the perpetrators were arrested, the locals forced the police to release them.

We have a good contact who helps to run a German rescue in Djerba and had tried to give advice to the other rescue, to no avail. She advised us to write to the British Ambassador in Tunis and we also contacted the Tunisian Ambassador in London, asking for a Trap-Neuter-Release programme to be implemented widely in Tunisia and also humane education to be taught in schools.

### **South Africa**

A shark conservation panel in South Africa was convened to review poor legislation and we wrote to support tighter measures to protect the species.

### **Mauritius**

Wild monkeys were being captured to ship to vivisection labs in Florida. We wrote to the Prime Minister and air companies to protest against this cruelty.

## **Middle East**

### **Israel**

News came that a ban on the sale of fur would come, excepting where fur was needed for religious clothing. We thanked Gila Gamaliel and Miki Haimovich, members of the Knesset, who had tabled the Bill.

### **Dubai**

Terrible neglect and cruel treatment of street animals on the part of the authorities was revealed in **Dubai** – care givers were prevented from feeding, caring for the animals, and no veterinary vouchers for subsidised treatment were available. We wrote to the UAE Ambassador in London and to Patrick Moody, British Ambassador to UAE.



## Asia

### India

#### Elephants killed by fireworks

A female and pregnant elephant was killed by fireworks in Kerala. This practice does not appear to be isolated. We wrote to the Kerala Governor to thank him for showing concern about this horrific act, but have no more information on any action taken.

#### Animal Rescuers attacked

Two women animal rescuers, legally walking a dog, were attacked by a mob in Kangra, Himachal Pradesh, and did not receive proper police attention. We wrote to ask the Police Superintendent, who had tried to encourage the women not to take out a complaint against one of the attackers as he judged their injury slight, to take appropriate action, reminding him of Indian Law in this matter, which should completely protect them and their work for street dogs.

**Update:** The good news is that, after five days, the police finally filed the complete FIR (First Information Report) for Pratibha and Veronica, and started their investigation of the case.

### Nepal

Dashain, one of the main festivals to honour the goddess Durja, took place in the third week of October. On one of the days, dogs, including street dogs, are honoured and garlanded with flowers. Unfortunately, on Oct 24, huge numbers of other animals, goats seem to be the majority, are sacrificed, in the same way as in the Gadhimai rite we have featured before.

We wrote to the Nepali Home Minister and Minister for Tourism. We cannot think such bloodletting is conducive to an expansion in tourism in the country, but subsequently found that many tourist and trekking companies actually advertise the festival as though it were something of great interest to visitors.

### Thailand

The Fodor and LiveKind tourism companies were promoting elephant interactions to visitors. LiveKind, a vegan company, was even condoning the use of the bull hook.



*Minnie the Elephant*

## North America

### United States

We wrote on the following subjects:

#### Minnie the elephant

We wrote for the third time to *Commerford Zoo* where Minnie is now alone. We appealed to the zoo to send her either to the *Tennessee Elephant Sanctuary* or *PAWS*, the sanctuary for rescued performing animals. *NONHUMAN Rights Project* leads on this matter: [www.nonhumanrights.org](http://www.nonhumanrights.org)

#### Non-native bullfrogs

These are imported into Los Angeles. With the help of Dr. Clifford Warwick, herpetologist and animal rights campaigner, we appealed to the city to ban the cruel and environmentally damaging trade. This is also an example of the 'wet' markets which are so hazardous to human health.

#### Mountain Lions

We asked *California Fish & Game* to list Mountain Lions as Endangered Species.

#### Project Coyote

Also in September, Project Coyote announced that Washington has become the seventh U.S. state to outlaw cruel and unsporting wildlife killing contests.

The new rule, put forth by the *Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife*, prohibits the killing of unprotected species including coyotes, bobcats, crows, foxes and raccoons as part of a contest.

#### Update on reef fishes in Hawai'i

AIA wrote twice in 2017, appealing to the Governor to end the catching of reef fishes to supply the aquarium trade.

A ban on catching the fishes does not seem achievable, though many attempts by *Hawai'iian Humane Society* have been made to get one. However, in October, a Bill was debated which would make some improvements to the catching and treatment of the fishes obligatory. This was bitterly resisted by the aquarium trade and might have something to do with the fact that having to comply with such requirements would make the trade less profitable – and in fact, on the island of Maui, it has had that effect and the companies have stopped catching fishes there.

The Bill has been delayed to debate some amendments. We sent thanks to the chair and sponsor of the Bill, who both worked very hard to defend the fishes, and the chair replied to thank us for our support, copying in other members of the legislature.

#### Bobcat

In New Mexico, a bobcat was killed by Fish & Game officers by strangulation, though there were officials in the state accredited and available to perform humane euthanasia. There was a furore about this horrific act and, as from the end of July, a rapid change of policy was declared, with euthanasia to be performed in line with American Veterinary Medicine Association regulations. We thanked NM Fish & Game Director for this advance, which is not before time.



**Keeping whales and dolphins in captivity is now illegal in Canada**

### Wolves

In Washington State, Governor Inslee had declared his opposition to the killing of wolves to protect farmers' stock – but in July it was allowed to go ahead. The packs there are very small and such depredations are likely to make them unviable. In August, the two remaining wolves of the Wedge pack, an adult female and an adult male, were killed by the state.

However - in September, the Governor introduced new rulemaking relating to wolf management, listing the following management outcomes:

*Standardized definition and requirements for the use of range riders;*

*Requirements for use of non-lethal deterrents most appropriate for specified situations (wolf population and range, size and location of livestock operation, terrain and habitat, history of depredation);*

*Action plans in areas of chronic depredation to end the need for annual lethal removal; and,*

*Compliance measures where livestock operators do not implement the required non-lethal measures.*



### Canada

#### Cetaceans

The passing of Bill S-203 means that Canada has made the keeping of whales and dolphins in captivity illegal.

We thanked Minister Bernadette Jordan for bringing in the ban and asked her to tighten up policies on the issue. One of the most important of these is to require that Canada enter into a comity agreement with any country to which a cetacean is exported to ensure enforcement of prohibitions against captive breeding and the use of the animal in performances for human entertainment.

These ambitious and compassionate objectives should protect the 60+ whales and dolphins already held in captivity in Canada.

#### Dakota Bear Sanctuary

The Dakota Bear Sanctuary, again in BC, is at risk of suffering from logging in the near vicinity. We asked the authorities not to allow this. They are old growth forests, which house rare spotted owl habitats and bear dens. They also have a rich cultural and spiritual history within the Indigenous community, and some are as old as 3,000 years.

#### Hog Farm

In British Columbia, cruel practices at a hog farm were not being stopped. The BC Attorney General replied to say that it was not within his province to act.

## Hispanic America

Several animal welfare advances are being made in the region.

### Colombia

#### **Bullfight Progress**

Bogotá Animal Party councillor Andrea Padilla, together with colleague Juan Baena, made a successful proposal de-incentivising the bullfight and banning the use of weapons in the ring. Andrea let us have the official Acuerdo 267 (Agreement) which is very significant. We also thanked the new Mayor of Bogotá, Claudia López, for her part in this advance.

#### **ACUERDO 767 - July 2 2020**

**Article 1: Object** – to de-incentivise bullfighting practices authorised in the capital, to contribute to making up for the animal protection deficit which is the norm there, and to strengthen animal rights culture.

**2: Permitted Practices** – in the capital, only bullfights and *novilladas* (involving young bulls and novice fighters) are allowed, and only in the permanent city bullring.

**3: Animal Protection** – all instruments which lacerate, cut, mutilate, wound, burn or harm animals in any way, or kill them, are banned.

**4: Citizen Culture** – the District Administration will oversee the promotion of collective action aimed at rejecting, in a non-violent manner, bullfighting practices.

**5: Bullfight Advertisements** – the organisers of bullfights will have to set aside, and use, 30% of bullfight advertising to inform the public about the animal suffering which is involved in bullfights and *novilladas*. This includes advertising on billboards, at bus stops, in press announcements, radio, TV and all mass media. The full costs of this will be the responsibility of the bullfight organisers.

**6: Dates Permitted** – events will only be allowed on dates fixed by the District Department of Culture, Recreation and Sport, which in all cases can include no more than three Sundays.

And **9: Operational Costs** – all costs of running bullfight events are the responsibility of the organizers and this obligation can be included in the contract signed.

It is very heartening to note that on June 10, Claudia López, in one of her first declarations as Mayor of Bogotá, said: “Not one penny of public money will go to the bullfight”.

Councillor Andrea Padilla is aware that these important modifications will not eliminate completely ill treatment, just limit it. She said: “On the way to the bull ring, a bull can lose up to 30 kilos of weight through stress and just appearing in the ring is very debilitating.

So one cannot talk of ‘cruelty-free’ bullfights, as they have been traditionally described, but ‘bloodless’ ones”.

AIA thanks Andrea, the Mayor and Bogotá City Councillors for taking this significant step forward in the field of animal welfare. We look forward to hearing of more compassionate work to advance the cause of animals in the city.

### Mexico

#### **Animal Protection Progress**

We thanked the Municipal President of Zapopan, Jalisco, for protection afforded for farmed animals, guard dogs, animals used in shows, and action against ‘wet’ markets.

#### **Illegal Slaughterhouses**

We asked a justice minister in Mexico City to bring an end to illegal slaughterhouses, a measure which is in fact in process of being voted on. In these informal establishments, violence is normalised and procedures for health and safety in contravention of Mexican law.

#### **Animal Advocate**

We have made an excellent new contact in Mexico City: Councillor Leticia Varela is an animal advocate who raises many relevant issues in the Council. When we wrote to thank her, she replied fully, with the official text of her legislative proposals covering many aspects of animal welfare. She promised to stay in touch and update us on this.

### Brazil

#### **Disciplinary proceedings for pony abuse**

A dressage pony was abused with impunity in Brazil. This happened because of a technicality – a judge had to let the perpetrator off as his abuse did not take place in the course of a competition. We appealed for action by the *Fédération Equestre Internationale* and received a full reply saying they would be opening disciplinary proceedings, and they also stated this on their web site.



## Australasia

### Australia

#### Live Exports

The horrors of live exports continue. A ban on sending animals into the northern summer heat after previous video footage revealed appalling unmitigated cruelty to sheep was implemented – after which an exporter, who had sheep already waiting at a port, asked for an exemption. This was at first rejected – then allowed.

In common with many others, we made a strong complaint to David Hazlehurst of the Live Exports Department, a thank you to Tina Hutchison, his deputy, who had supported the ban, and copy to the Federal Minister responsible.

David Hazlehurst explained his reasons for allowing the exemption in a detailed statement, but it amounted to his judgment that the damage done to this trade outweighed any risk to the sheep. So much for Australia not tolerating cruelty, as we have been told by a succession of ministers over the years.

This exemption will be challenged in court by the excellent organisation *Animals Australia*.

**Important update as of August 14:** New revelations were made public by *Animals Australia* about the export of sheep and cows for Eid to Jordan and Indonesia, including extreme cruelty at the destination. In Indonesia, some of the slaughterhouses are in fact Australian government-approved and industry-audited.

Campaigners are now asking the government to revoke the licences to operate of repeat offenders among the exporting industry. This would be desirable, but the trade appears impossible to ameliorate, so we always ask for a complete ban to be implemented.

The Australian government seems perfectly content to oversee repeated neglect and cruelty inflicted on the most vulnerable of animals. AIA and *Quaker Concern for Animals* have over ten years of experience responding to a succession of ministers there and we wrote to Minister David Littleproud on the day of the report protesting in strong terms about this, and copying in the official who actually agreed to exempt the shipment – please see above.

We have also supported *Animals Australia* in asking for independently-monitored CCTV to be installed in all slaughterhouses dealing with Australian animals.



### Koalas in New South Wales

There is more logging going on. Koalas cannot be saved if their habitat is destroyed. This is part of the reply from the minister to our objections:

*Thank you for your interest in the preservation of koala habitat on public land and the proposed Great Koala National Park. The NSW Government is prioritising the conservation of koala habitat under the NSW Koala Strategy. This includes establishing new koala reserves and purchasing land with prime koala habitat to be added to the national park system. Areas of land that make up the proposed Great Koala National Park will be considered as part of these processes.*

*More than 3,600 hectares of priority koala habitat has already been purchased to add to the national park estate. In addition to this, more than 24,000 hectares of state forest is being set aside for koala conservation. This includes over 4,000 hectares of state forest that was added to our national parks in 2018.*

*You may be interested to know Minister Kean has set a goal to double koalas in NSW by 2050...*

Similarly, Greater Gliders – we appealed to Sussan Ley, Federal Environment Minister, to call in the Manyana Beach development planning application, which will threaten their habitat.

**Positive Update:** *"On August 17, Federal Minister for Environment Sussan Ley decided that the Ozy Homes development of Manyana Beach Estate is to be "called in" under the EPBC act. That means the project will have to go through a more thorough assessment under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. Minister Ley believes that the proposed development/action is likely to have a significant impact on threatened species such as the Grey Headed Flying Fox, Greater Glider and Swift Parrot, amongst others."*

Koalas were being threatened by Brandy Hill Quarry. We wrote to Minister Sussan Ley and heard that she was allowing a time extension to take more evidence.

Koalas were described as 'tree rats' by John Barilaro, Deputy PM of New South Wales. We reminded him that if logging and subsequent destruction of the environment, especially after the terrible bush fires, does not get stopped, koalas will go extinct in NSW.



### Wild Horses

Brumbies are once again threatened with being shot in Victoria. We appealed to the Prime Minister and other ministers to stop this slaughter, done, as it is in the US, to protect grazing for domestic animals. A cattleman in the state however took out an injunction to try to stop this.

### Tests on Monkeys

Very distressing maternal deprivation myopia tests are being carried out on monkeys at Brien Holden Institute in Australia and also the USA and we wrote in protest.

### Flying Fox Relocations

We read that flying foxes in a roost at the Cairns library in Queensland were being dispersed in the breeding season, which is illegal. Despite efforts by caregivers, it was said that several babies were lost. We wrote to Minister Sussan Ley to ask her to get this cruel practice stopped. A full reply arrived, explaining that there are some 40 possible roost sites in the vicinity, in places less exposed and safer than the library, and that all efforts are being made to ensure the flying foxes are not harmed.

### East Antarctic Marine Park

Some good news to hearten us: we previously wrote to the Federal Government about protection for the Antarctic. The organisation *Save Our Marine Life* has **updated** on the issue. They say:

*"The urgently-needed East Antarctic Marine Park is getting closer to becoming a reality. Thanks to thousands of you taking action, the Australian Government is making the Antarctic a priority and working to ensure this marine park stays firmly on the agenda when the Antarctic nations meet later this year."*

[www.saveourmarinelife.org.au](http://www.saveourmarinelife.org.au)

### Whales

Migrating whales are being caught in shark nets off the Queensland coast. We asked the ministers, failing the counsel of perfection which would be not to catch the sharks at all, to at least remove the nets for whale migration time, as New South Wales has.

### New Zealand

#### Sinking of Live Export Ship

We wrote to PM Jacinda Ardern and Agriculture Minister O'Connor protesting about the live export ship which went down with animals all lost, including humans. The ship was already known to have faults too.

#### Greens' Animal Welfare programme

The Aotearoa/NZ Greens were likely to be part of the PM's new government team. We asked them, if this were so, to add the terrible Forced Swim Test to their animal welfare programme, which aims to phase out farrowing crates, rodeos, greyhound racing and live exports.

#### Animal Welfare Minister

The *New Zealand Anti-Vivisection Society* reported that there was no longer a Minister for Animal Welfare. We sent our congratulations to Jacinda and NZ Labour, with a copy to the Greens, on her convincing success and asked for an Animal Welfare Minister to be appointed.

Meka Whitiri was appointed Associate Minister, under the auspices of Agriculture. This is not the best result, as there will inevitably be conflicts, but better than no seat at the table.

## Which is More Dangerous: Wildlife Markets or Animal Research ?

*Dr Andre Menache*



**The race is now on to develop a vaccine to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Developing a new vaccine is not without risk and so it is imperative that researchers use robust scientific methods in order to avoid some of the mistakes of the past. An important step in the right direction is to avoid using animal cells or animal viruses to manufacture human vaccines in the 21st century. A lack of technology is not the obstacle here. Rather, it is outdated manufacturing practices and a political culture that puts short term profits before public safety. This is particularly relevant in an era of personalized medicine: the opportunity to create vaccines that are more effective and with fewer side effects <sup>1</sup>.

By now we are all acutely aware of the risk of transmission of animal viruses in the context of "wildlife markets" and the consumption of wild animal products. Sadly, countries like China have issued only a temporary ban on such practices. Once the coronavirus pandemic eases up, it could be a return to "business as usual" in places where wild animal consumption is a tradition.

**Dangers of using animal viruses in human vaccines**

There is, however, another cause for concern, in the form of medical research where animal viruses are involved in the production of human vaccines. To be clear, we are not talking about the use of animal viruses in the context of biological warfare, we are talking about vaccines manufactured by the pharmaceutical industry destined for general use in the human population.

The scientific research community has been taken by surprise by the speed at which the COVID-19 viral pandemic has spread throughout the world. Clinical trials are already underway, with scientists scrambling to find an effective vaccine. Some vaccine trials have received the official go-ahead without waiting for the results of the usual animal tests. Under normal circumstances, vaccine development can take up to 15 to 20 years, from start to finish, and includes giving the vaccine to various animal species to determine safety and efficacy.

With advancements in technology, industry and academia appear to have significantly reduced the timeline for the production of a future vaccine. Besides the questions surrounding the reliability and relevance of animal testing with regard to predicting human outcome, there is the equally important issue

about which most people are completely unaware: the use of animal viruses in human vaccines <sup>2</sup>. A current example is the use of a genetically modified chimpanzee virus grown in duck cell culture for use in human vaccines. This vaccine has already been administered to healthy human volunteers in the UK and Senegal as part of an early clinical trial <sup>3</sup>.

As the saying goes, "history does not repeat itself, man repeats his mistakes". It is worth taking a brief look at specific examples of the not so distant past to avoid repeating the same mistakes. Some of the early polio vaccine administered to millions of people between 1955 and 1963 was contaminated with the simian virus 40, SV40. This virus originated in the monkey kidney cell cultures used to produce the vaccine. The SV40 virus is the most potent cancer causing virus known to science and is now thought to be responsible for the proliferation of certain rare human forms of cancer <sup>4</sup>.

Vaccines containing animal viruses also share some of the risks associated with gene therapy. The death of 18 year old Jesse Gelsinger in September 1999 following experimental gene therapy was a wake-up call for the scientific research community on the risks of using viruses as a means transporting healthy genes into the cells of patients <sup>5</sup>. Gelsinger died as a result of an immune overreaction caused by the virus. In a different clinical trial in 2003, it was reported that some of the children born with inadequate immune systems who received gene therapy (also based on a viral vector) showed some improvement, while others developed leukemia (cancer of the white blood cells) <sup>6</sup>. In patients who have responded well to these treatments, the long term health effects are still unknown <sup>7</sup>.

The above events highlight some of the major risks associated with using viruses (often of animal origin) as vectors of genes or in vaccines, and the risks of using animal tissues (monkey kidney, in the case of polio) as a means of cultivating the virus for subsequent human use. In the UK in 2000, polio vaccine manufactured using fetal calf serum was withdrawn following a massive public outcry in the wake of the Mad Cow Disease outbreak. Millions of doses of the vaccine had already been administered to infants in the UK when it was revealed that the fetal calf serum used in the vaccine was of UK origin <sup>8</sup>. Although the risks were played down by the authorities, it should be noted that Mad Cow Disease is caused by prions, which are even smaller than viruses and were undetectable in blood products at the time.

## Dangers of using the animal model in medical research

In short, the COVID-19 pandemic is a wake-up call to all of society and industry to stop using animal tissues and animal viruses to manufacture vaccines destined for human use. It is also an opportunity to ditch the "animal model", a concept that belongs to the 19th century. To try to reproduce a human disease, or test a human vaccine, in an animal is a perversion of science, a complete lack of understanding of what constitutes a complex system, such as the immune system. Each animal species is also an example of a complex system and therefore cannot serve as a model for another. Among humans, there are also important differences between individuals, in terms of susceptibility to COVID-19. Rather than experimenting with ferrets, monkeys or mice, it would be far more scientific to invest in high-performance technologies of the 21st century.

One such example is the "MIMIC" (Modular IMMune In vitro Construct) which is an in vitro model of the human immune system <sup>9</sup>. Advanced in vitro technologies (such as MIMIC, 'organs on a chip' and others) must by today's standards, aim for a prediction rate of 85% to 90% in order to be accepted at the regulatory level. Although animal tests are still required before human clinical trials, they fail spectacularly: 9 out of 10 drugs that appear safe and effective in animal tests subsequently fail in human trials, precisely due to a lack of safety or efficacy, according to the *US Food and Drug Administration* <sup>10</sup>. A testing strategy based on a battery of in vitro tests using human material would be far more relevant than pursuing animal tests.

It is time to raise the bar in current biomedical research if we want to preserve our health in the face of emerging diseases of the 21st century. Perhaps the COVID-19 pandemic will help us to question some of our irresponsible scientific practices as well as the obsolete regulations that still impose them.

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## Last Chance Saloon

### Ramifications of the Corona Virus on the Human Race

*Nitin Mehta MBE - Young Jains*



**In the space of a few weeks the Corona virus has disrupted our long held ideas of what happiness and success is.** We have been brought up to be goal oriented. The primary goal is to earn enough money to have a comfortable life.

Absolutely no problem with that. However, from the 17th century onward, the pursuance of wealth resulted in those with power invading and plundering other nations and communities. The 19th Century saw the rise of Communism, Capitalism and the National Socialism of Hitler. The two world wars resulted in the destruction of Europe and millions of deaths. This was followed by the deadly conflict between Capitalism and Communism. Tens of millions died in the pursuance of these ideologies. Though ideologically different, both Capitalism and Communism believed in science and its ability to tame nature in pursuance of wealth. These ideologies believed that animals, forests, rivers, oceans and all the mineral resources could be used for human benefit. Thus began the plunder of the planet, as never seen before.

This age of the beginning of the damage to the planet is known as 'the Anthropocene'. The industrial revolution enslaved and entrapped millions to work in factories and what was known as 'satanic mills'. It legitimised slavery and bonded labour. By the late 19th century Capitalism was stripped of some of its inhumane practices, thanks to many enlightened individuals. However, Capitalism itself carried on at breakneck speed. Economic growth was, and is, the Mantra.

During the last hundred years, the world's natural resources have been driven to extinction. Mother Earth has been made infertile. The lungs of the planet, the Amazon forests have been devastated. Water resources are getting scarce. Global warming poses a big threat and the Antarctic is melting away. Coronavirus has proved that when nature hits

back, our advanced civilisation and military might is of no use. Our children and grandchildren are already facing the consequences of human greed.

So what can be done? In the absence of any credible alternative, we have to live with the Capitalistic model. It has the ability to create millions of jobs. However, Capitalism will have to reform. First of all the tyranny of continuous economic growth as a sign of success has to be dropped. Instead, the world needs innovative ideas whereby the health of Mother Earth should be seen as a matter of success or failure. With immediate effect, the manufacturing of motor cars depending on petrol or diesel has to be stopped. We just cannot expose the new generation to the pollution of these vehicles. Our dependence on oil has to be minimised.

All slaughterhouses have to be closed with immediate effect. Nature is exacting a heavy price for our barbaric treatment of animals. **The violence inflicted on billions of animals is leaving a cloud of unmovable negativity on the human race. It makes us as a species morally bankrupt.** How can we expect peace for ourselves when we commit so much violence on the other species we share this planet with? The export of all animals should be stopped immediately. Hunting of animals, locking them up in cages, using them in laboratories to find cures for human diseases, using and abusing them for sports and keeping them in zoos for human entertainment, also has to be banned. Commercial fishing has to stop immediately if we are to save our Rivers and Oceans. **Apart from over 80 billion animals raised for meat every year, trillions of fish are also killed annually. There are, at any time, four times more chickens on the planet than humans. We need two planets to sustain these numbers.**

We are facing a huge threat from the growing ineffectiveness of antibiotics. Almost 45% of all antibiotics produced are fed to animals raised for meat. People consuming these animals are also ingesting the antibiotics and becoming immune to them. Thousands of people are already dying due to antibiotics not working.

There is a danger that deadly diseases that have been wiped out will make a comeback. There are 190,000 deaths from multidrug resistance TB. Without antibiotics, surgeries will become life threatening. Transplant patients will not survive without them and childbirth will become much more dangerous. Pneumonia, which was the main cause of deaths in the pre-antibiotics era, may make a comeback.

Every human activity should put the welfare of Mother Earth first. We are already only a few harvests away from Mother Earth failing to give us the grains we need to feed ourselves. We really are in the last chance saloon. Future generations face a climate catastrophe whereby droughts, floods, cyclones and hurricanes will make life unliveable. This will be followed by mass migration and conflict on an unprecedented scale.

Here is a list of what needs to be done over and above everything mentioned above:

1. All multinational companies and conglomerates should adopt the principle of Mother Earth first. Their every action should be centred on this principle.
2. The destruction of the Amazon Rainforests in South America should be stopped straight away. In return for stopping the destruction of the forests, countries like Brazil which are home to these forests should be given financial assistance and other incentives to become the guardian of these forests.
3. It should become mandatory for every new building to have solar panels. All existing buildings should also be installed with solar panels.
4. All traditional arts and crafts as well as cottage industries should be revived.
5. The surviving traditional communities like the Masai of East Africa, the Aborigines of Australia and the original inhabitants of the Americas should be represented on all national and international forums so that, with humility, we can learn from them the art of protecting Mother Earth.
6. All export of weapons of war should be stopped. It might earn nations money but it is blood money which will never bring any joy.
7. There should be a complete overhaul of the education system. The emphasis should shift from pursuance of gross materialism to appreciating and preserving our planet.
8. Humankind will have to adopt a plant-based diet. All children have empathy and sympathy for animals. This has to be nurtured by parents and the State. Future generations will wonder what pleasure we derived in eating animals.
9. In the developing world the flow of people from the villages to cities has to be stopped with utter urgency. Mahatma Gandhi wanted every village to be self-sufficient. India has to take a lead in this matter.
10. Ask yourself - do you need that extra car, or extra clothes or extra properties?
11. Almost all nations should adopt a two-child policy.
12. The pharmaceutical companies and the medical world should open up to accommodate alternative practices like Yoga and Acupuncture. Ayurveda and other traditional practices should be integrated in the medical system.
13. Every town and village should have a mini-forest or woodland in its border. Reviving the biodiversity of our planet is the need of the hour. Plant trees as often as possible.
14. Greta Thunberg, the young girl from Sweden, is tirelessly fighting to awaken the nations of the world and mobilising hundreds and thousands of young people to act for our planet before it is too late. We need tens of thousands of Gretas all over the world.
15. Prohibit the use of pesticides in agriculture. When birds disappear it is a sign of ecological catastrophe. Pesticides kill birds, insects, pollinating bees, ladybirds and earthworms. Whole communities in countries like Peru in South America suffer from respiratory problems and other ailments, as their environment is saturated with pesticides used to protect mainly soya crops which are exported to the US to feed billions of cattle raised for beef.

Let each one of us play a role in achieving some of the goals mentioned above. We owe it to future generations.

*Please visit my website: [www.nitinmehta.co.uk](http://www.nitinmehta.co.uk) for more articles.*

## Season of Creation 2020 and News from the Vatican

*Chris Fegan - Chief Executive, Catholic Concern for Animals*

**The Season of Creation 2020 began on 1st September with the World Day of Prayer for Creation** and continued until 4th October with the feast day of St Francis of Assisi. The Catholic Church officially supports the Season of Creation and Pope Francis invited all Catholics to be actively involved. [Here is the message of Pope Francis](#) concerning this important time for Catholics and his letter to us all.

Pope Francis continued to issue important statements during this crucial period, including [this message](#) which, while focusing on the Covid-19 Pandemic, discussed how we must look after all of God's Creation, as well as each other, if we are to 'emerge from a pandemic'. An important excerpt is shown below.

*Abusing them, on the other hand, is a grave sin that damages us, and harms us, and makes us sick.*

It is worth referring directly to his words which echo the message in his *Encyclical on the Environment, Laudato Si'*.



### Excerpt from Pope Francis's Message on the Care of Creation

**'We must also extend this care to our common home:** to the Earth and to every creature. All forms of life are interconnected and our health depends on that of the ecosystems that God created and entrusted to us to care for (see Gen 2:15). Abusing them, on the other hand, is a grave sin that damages us, and harms us, and makes us sick. The best antidote against this misuse of our common home is contemplation. But how come? Isn't there a vaccine for this, for the care of the common home, so as not to set it aside? What is the antidote against the sickness of not taking care of our common home? It is contemplation. 'If someone has not learned to stop and admire something beautiful, we should not be surprised if he or she treats everything as an object to be used and abused without scruple'. Also in terms of using things and discarding them.

*Creatures have a value in and of themselves and each one "reflects in its own way a ray of God's infinite wisdom and goodness" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 339).*

However, our common home, creation, is not a mere 'resource'. Creatures have a value in and of themselves and each one 'reflects in its own way a ray of God's infinite wisdom and goodness' (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 339). This value and this ray of divine light must be discovered and, in order to discover it, we need to be silent, we need to listen, and we need to contemplate. Contemplation also heals the soul.'

# Climate Crisis and Creation Care: Eco-Economic Sustainability, Ecological Integrity and Justice (*forthcoming mid 2021*)

*Dr Christina Nellist - Pan-Orthodox Concern for Animals*



**In my latest book, over forty experts interrogate what it means to live sustainable lives in the era of climate change.**

They offer suggestions to policy makers and individuals alike, in the hope of steering us away from the cliff-edge and towards a future of sustainable living and flourishing for all, within the confines of our planetary boundaries. That such a book is still necessary in 2021 is testament to the failure of successive governments across the world to: a) acknowledge the science and b) acknowledge the wisdom in the thousands of voices from across the world, which spoke and continue to speak, with knowledge and sincerity on this subject.

In the 70s and 80s many of us were teaching or producing scientific papers on various aspects of what we now refer to as 'climate change'. During this same period, some religious leaders, like the Ecumenical Patriarch of the Orthodox Christian Church, His All Holiness Demetrios 1st, expressed concern on the misuse and abuse of

the natural environment. He called for individuals to change their hearts and minds and to view the world not as something solely to be used as a resource, but rather, as something to nurture, by enabling creation's flourishing. In 1989 he established the 1st September (the first day of the new ecclesiastical calendar), as the day dedicated to the protection of the natural environment, calling for Orthodox Christians to pray for the protection and preservation of God's creation. This work on behalf of creation continues under his successor, His All Holiness, Bartholomew (also known as the Green Patriarch), culminating at this present time in the Halki Summit 111 (2019) entitled: *Theological Formation and Ecological Awareness: A Conversation on Education and the Environment*, which essentially called for 'Creation Care' to be added to Orthodox Seminary and Academic educational programs. Similar calls and practical guidance are also found in other faiths and these are included in the book.

In the 80s and 90s progress also began to be made in the political sphere, with the 1992 *Climate Convention* in Rio and similar Conventions and commitments of intent,

continuing until today. Yet, despite the grand words and commitments, we continue to stumble to the edge of the cliff, as if we are in some collective psychosis, because these very same governments refuse to implement the necessary strategies to effect real change. They appear to be more concerned with re-election, than saving the lives of their citizens and more than that, the lives, indeed existence, of the myriad other creatures on this planet.

This is one of the reasons why those from a faith-based worldview are vitally important to the present debate on sustainable living in an increasingly unstable world. They provide an alternative voice and vision for the future, based in many cases upon teachings from sacred texts, which inform us that the entire world is interconnected and sacred. They provide spiritual, moral and ethical arguments on the link between climate change, a flourishing creation and goals for sustainable living.

Today, the vast majority of people understand that climate change is real and that it is dangerous. Whilst their level of knowledge on the subject varies (and it is likely that the majority need to know more), with children to grandparents demonstrating on the streets in countries across the world, there is at last, an acknowledgment that climate change is real and that urgent and immediate action must be taken.

Societies better understand their global interconnectedness to each other, to other creatures and to our planetary boundaries. Our presence, level of consumption and misuse of the natural world, has negatively changed our atmosphere, weather patterns, environments and the lives of the creatures within those environments. This misuse threatens all forms of life via food insecurity, rising sea levels, mass migration and social unrest, to name just four from the awaiting crises.

Whilst recent attention has been diverted to the Covid 19 pandemic, the spectre of climate change reality continues. One good thing arising from the pandemic is our reawakening to the important things in life – our families, our green spaces and the creatures in them, clean air and our health systems. Increasingly, we hear disparate voices repeating the same message – we do not want more of the same, we want a ‘new normal’ and ‘building back better’ policy decisions.

Dealing with Covid 19 has meant dramatic changes to the way we live, resulting in our industries and economies grinding to a

halt. Most surprising of all, is that this ‘lockdown’ has been achieved with a level of civic compliance never thought possible outside of oppressive regimes. This indicates that the prospect of attaining the ‘new normal’ has never been more attainable. What is required now is for politicians and policy makers to ride the wave of desire for real change, rather than lazily returning to the destructive policies and economic strategies of the past.

It is however, equally important for us as individuals to realise that in order to achieve these changes, we must play our part by changing our desires and demands. Cheap meat, cheap clothes or cheap flights are not cheap, if the full social, environmental and economic cost of production, transportation and GHG emissions are taken into account. Cheap is a delusion fed to us by those with other agendas; the real costs – unstable weather patterns, habitat loss and species extinctions, ocean acidification and rising sea-levels are now only too apparent.

Some changes are relatively easy for the individual – turning off the lights, buying green energy; flying less often or not at all, driving more slowly, cycling or walking whenever possible; reducing, recycling, reusing; avoiding fast fashion, giving up or reducing animal food products and buying from local farms with better animal welfare standards whenever possible; growing our own food; digging up lawns and planting meadows; planting more trees; avoiding plastic; lobbying our MPs and for those who can – having less children. The list is long enough to cater for varying degrees of commitment to change.

In this latest book, over forty specialists with expertise from different disciplines and cultures write with authority and clarity on various aspects of sustainable living in an era where climate change is acknowledged as the greatest threat to human existence on this planet. They write from faith-based or secular perspectives but share a desire to explain why we are in this situation and how we might effect real change, both as individuals and as societies, in order to mitigate the worst effects of climate change. They write in the hope that we – either as individuals or as decision makers in government and civil society – will be guided to respond far more quickly than is currently the case; for without swift action, we condemn future generations of human and non-human animals to lives of intolerable instability, with little hope of regaining what humans have squandered by our collective arrogance.

# Climate Crisis and Creation Care: Economic Sustainability, Ecological Integrity and Justice The Hindu and Jain Perspective

*Nitin Mehta MBE - Young Jains*



**Two of the oldest religions of the world, Hinduism and Jainism, have advocated a lifestyle which is in harmony with nature.**

The resources that nature has provided in the form of forests, rivers and oceans, as well as the sun and the moon, are worthy of worship to Hindus and Jains. The idea is not to exploit the world's resources but to respect and revere them. It is not unusual to see people in India offering prayers to the rivers, mountains, the sun and moon, or bowing down to an elephant. The idea that animals are sentient beings and have souls has been around for tens of thousands of years. The struggle that other cultures and faiths have with this idea is a source of mystery to faiths born in India, namely Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism.

Compassion towards animals is a core belief of Hindus and Jains. Indeed, there is no spiritual progress without compassion towards all living beings. It is bad karma to harm animals - even insects. It is in the nature of a mosquito to bite you but it is bad karma to harm it. You may protect yourself from being bitten by taking preventive measures but you should not harm it. Just as every action has a reaction, good and bad karma will impact an individual's actions.

Closely linked with the law of karma is the belief in reincarnation. The holy book of the Hindus, the Bhagavad Gita states that we have all been born before and will be born again. Our next birth depends on our actions in this birth.

## The Hindu Perspective

The Bhumi (Earth) Project has put together a Hindu declaration on climate change. It quotes several ancient Hindu scriptures.

**Atharva Veda (12.12):** "The Earth is my mother and I am her child."



**The Mahabharata (109.10):** "Dharma exists for the welfare of all beings. Hence, that by which the welfare of all beings is sustained, that for sure is Dharma."

**The Srimad Bhagvatam (11/2/41):** "Ether, Air, Water, Earth, Planets, all creatures, directions, trees and plants, rivers and seas, they are all organs of God's body. Remembering this a devotee respects all species."

## The Jain Perspective

The Jain Declaration on Nature was presented to Prince Philip at Buckingham Palace on 23 October 1990.

There are 24 Tirthankars, enlightened souls, in Jainism. The 24th Tirthankar, Lord Mahaveer was present around 2,600 years ago. He preached a complete and absolute compassion to all living beings. Jains are well known for running animal sanctuaries in India. There are five main concepts Jains live by:

Non-violence (Ahimsa); truth (Satya); non-stealing (Asetya); chastity (Brahmacharya); and non-possessiveness or non-materialism (Aparigraha).

Jain monks live to the letter of these principles. From being extra-vigilant in not harming even an ant or an insect to living by using a minimum amount of resources. Even a drop of water should not be wasted. There is another concept Jains live by. It is called 'Abhay Daan'. It means giving someone protection from fear of death. So not only are you required to avoid any violence (himsa), you have to be proactive in your non-violence (ahimsa). This means you should actively campaign against all forms of exploitation, especially of animals as they cannot fight for themselves. Many Hindus and Jains stop animals being taken for illegal slaughter.

Jains also believe in the idea of 'Parasparopagraho Jivanam', meaning that we are interdependent on other living beings as well as all that nature provided in the form of rivers, oceans, forests and mountains.

In 1958, Chairman Mao launched a war on sparrows because they were eating too much grain. The whole country was mobilised to kill millions of them. Around 195,000 were killed in one day in Shanghai alone. Sparrows were important to the food chain. The bugs they fed on thrived, the locust population spiralled out of control, as did grasshoppers. The insects devoured the crops and famine followed. A salient lesson to human beings that when you disturb nature it reacts with ferocity. In the West the emphasis is on taming nature and taking everything out of it. This is the reason why the world is on the brink of disaster. In our own lifetime we are seeing droughts, cyclones, hurricanes and many other disasters. Driven by short-term profits, the human race just does not see what is staring in its face. Future generations will suffer greatly for our folly.

### **Plant based healthy diet**

The health benefits of a vegetarian/vegan diet are indisputable. Various forms of cancer, diabetes and heart diseases are linked with meat eating. The biggest challenge facing the medical world now is that antibiotics are not working. This is because 45% of all antibiotics are fed to animals raised for meat and they are losing their potency. Without effective antibiotics, diseases like TB and pneumonia will rise once again. Surgery, childbirth and organ transplant will all become dangerous without antibiotics.

### **Economic Sustainability and the Planet**

Capitalism has become the world order. The fight to restrain the forces of consumerism it has galvanised is futile. In 1909 Mahatma Gandhi talked about the danger of unplanned

and reckless industrialisation. However, his voice and that of others like Ralph Waldo Emerson, John Ruskin, Henry David Thoreau and Leo Tolstoy were drowned out by the march of industrialisation. We will have to narrow down to the biggest cause of the plight of the planet and what impacts Mother Earth most negatively and try to tackle it.

### **Meat and Fish Consumption**

The one single factor that poses the greatest threat to the planet is meat and fish consumption. Over 70 billion animals are raised and killed for meat consumption every year. Our planet is simply not big enough to sustain these numbers. The destruction of rainforests for cattle ranching, the insatiable demand to produce cereals to feed the animals, the waste of water resources, the billions of tons of animals waste choking the waterways and the methane gas released by billions of farm animals is the cause of the plight of the planet. The earthworms, pollinating bees, insects and birds are all disappearing. We might have only a few harvests left. Huge trawlers used in fishing are killing off all marine life, mangrove forests and coral reefs. The future generations face a catastrophe with an uninhabitable planet.

Mankind's brutal treatment of animals is leaving a cloud of unmovable despondency, which is leaving human beings bereft of any joy, happiness or peace. To mend the planet European nations and the United States need to urgently abandon meat, fish and dairy. A vegan diet is the only solution to save the world. Veganism is the ideal but vegetarianism can be a very important first step for those who cannot make a direct transition from being a carnivore to a vegan. The out-dated plea by the United Nations and some animal welfare organisations to reduce meat consumption will not work anymore. Justice will also be served to the downtrodden and poor nations of South America and Africa as instead of food cereals being fed to animals raised for meat, it will become accessible to them at affordable prices.

Animals have to be accorded fundamental rights. They should not be exported to other countries, they should not be hunted, they should not be imprisoned in cages, they should not be subject to horrific experiments. All forms of animal exploitation should become illegal. We need a new dawn whereby mankind makes peace with the animal kingdom. We will not be doing any favours to animals, we will be doing ourselves a favour. Once the killing of billions of animals stops, mankind will be at peace with itself. It is now or never.

## Catholic Concern for Animals Fish Welfare Project 2020-2022

*Chris Fegan - Chief Executive, Catholic Concern for Animals*



**Catholic Concern for Animals (CCA) are pursuing a project** to engage, educate and influence the worldwide Catholic Community and other faith groups and individuals in respect of the issues related to Fish Welfare, including the Catholic clergy and the

Catholic lay population.

The project has been seriously impacted and delayed by the Covid-19 Pandemic during 2020 and therefore activity in relation to the project will continue through 2021 and into the early months of 2022.

A major CCA priority of this project is to engage with all our friends, colleagues and partners in the other faith communities and to do this the obvious medium is the Animal Interfaith Alliance.

The last known estimate of the population size of the Catholic global community is over 1.2 billion people with about 300 million of those people living in Europe with the centre and "headquarters" of the Catholic Church located in Vatican City, Rome, Italy. In addition, it is estimated that around 80% of the world's population identify "to some degree" with one faith group or another.

As the voice for animals, their welfare and rights within the Catholic Church, CCA are in a unique position to take forward this project and to influence the behaviour of the worldwide Catholic and faith population and moving them towards a more positive and compassionate view of fish and marine life more generally. It is also crucial that CCA work with all other faith-based colleagues in this regard.

A key aspect of the Project will be to consider Catholic theology and teaching in regard to fish eating and why (if at all) the Catholic Church and wider Christian community consider fish eating to be different from meat eating.

The subject of "fasting" will be a major aspect of this particular area of investigation.

A very good example of this working is the *Christian Ethics of Farmed Animal Welfare*



**Catholic Concern  
for Animals**

REGISTERED CHARITY NO 231022



### Join us Online

for our

## Fish and Marine Welfare Conference 2021

*Monday 18th January 2021*  
10.30am - 5.00pm

The Conference is being hosted on Zoom due to Covid-19

*Further details will be announced in the CCA newsletter and on the website*



**Speakers include:**

**Welcome** - Bishop John Arnold  
*Environment Spokesperson, Bishops  
Conference of England and Wales*

**Keynote Address** - Speaker from the  
Vatican, Dicastery for Integral Human  
Development (*invited and awaiting  
confirmation*)

**Fish Welfare - A European Perspective**  
Doug Waley *Eurogroup for Animals*

**A Christian Ethical Assessment of UK  
Fish Farming** - Prof. David Clough  
*University of Chester*

**Fish the Forgotten Species** - Dr Gerald  
*Taylor Catholic Concern for Animals*

(CEFAW) Project, which has been underway for the best part of three years and launched its project report very recently. A major component of this hugely important *research into UK farmed animal welfare* relates to fish welfare in UK Aquaculture, and the Project Leader, Professor David Clough, will be speaking about this issue at the CCA *Fish and Marine Welfare Conference* on January 18<sup>th</sup>.

CCA also actively engages with institutions and charities worldwide (including *Eurogroup for Animals*, the United Nations, RSPCA, IFAW, CIWF, etc.) and these partners also work closely on fish welfare, both in traditional commercial fishing in wild fisheries and also the increasingly important topic of fish welfare in aquaculture.

Capitalising on CCA's network and reach capabilities, we plan a major educational project aimed at the worldwide clergy and all lay Catholic populations from "the Vatican to the smallest rural parish" and whose purpose is to inform and advocate for Fish Welfare

using, on the one hand, “state of the art” latest scientific knowledge base and, on the other hand, distinctive Catholic Social Teaching based on Pope Francis’s Encyclical *Laudato Si’*.

I have already discussed some of the aims and hoped-for outcomes and the detailed project will include the following planned activities:

1. A series of designated visits and talks by the CCA Chief Executive to raise awareness of and promote fish welfare among key institutions and organisations that educate the public (e.g., schools and learned societies), influence thinking and policy (e.g. conferences, ministries and parishes) and inform practice (e.g. NGO’s and also public and private industry). In particular, planned visits will include countries in Europe such as Poland, Italy, France, Germany, Ireland and the UK but will also hope to include other parts of the world such as Africa, Asia, Latin America and the USA. We will work with colleagues in all faiths and faith groups, including other Christian denominations by including the Animal Interfaith Alliance.

2. A series of numerous published articles in successive issues of *The Ark* and supported by CCA’s digital newsletter which is available in both English and Spanish. These publications will be augmented in CCA’s social media output on platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and also on the CCA Podcasting and YouTube outlets. These articles will raise awareness of and promote fish welfare with a particular focus on various topics including diet, commercial fishing and fish farms. CCA will work with the Animal Interfaith Alliance to divulgate these articles to other faith groups and individuals. Additional articles will target the designated Catholic media, both broadcast such as EWTN and the Catholic TV network and Catholic print media throughout Europe and further afield.

3. A central part of the project is the already highlighted and major *CCA Fish and Marine Welfare Conference*, which will be held “virtually” on Zoom on January 18<sup>th</sup> 2021. This will be held in co-operation with the Vatican, the Jesuits and the Animal Interfaith Alliance. The Conference will bring together fish welfare experts and advocates, and leading Catholic and other theologians and clergy, to include intended speakers and attendees from the Vatican and elsewhere, and also Catholic experts on the environment and bio-diversity,

including senior Catholic politicians and also the Catholic lay population. We hope that the conference will attract over 100 registered delegates. The event will be publicised through CCA’s and the Animal Interfaith Alliance’s media networks (magazines, websites, social media) and will target all faith groups and individuals, animal advocates and environmental groups. The conference will be webcasted and recorded, and proceedings will be published in a special issue of *The Ark* on fish welfare in either spring or summer 2021 and selected articles may be made available worldwide through CCA’s and the Interfaith Alliance’s social media networks and digital outlets.

### Impact Activities and Measures

Impact of the above-planned activities will be measured as follows:

During the visits we will gather audiences’ existing views on fish welfare as well as their existing behaviour towards fish by interviewing representative audience members as appropriate.

Post-talks, we will distribute questionnaires and conduct interviews to assess any changes in perspective. Additionally, we will follow up on key audience representatives to assess the extent to which the talks have influenced changes in thinking, behaviour, policy and practice.

We will monitor the number of downloads for the articles that we will have made available on the CCA’s and the Animal Interfaith Alliance’s websites. We will also make available an online questionnaire to gather visitors and readers’ comments on how the articles may have influenced their thinking and behaviour.

Attendance to the conference following the visits and articles will in itself be a measure of impact of those activities.

We will create a dedicated project page on the CCA website, with links to all related articles, conference recordings and proceedings, and general information.

Overall, it is envisaged that this project will instigate a major discussion within the Catholic Church and other faith groups worldwide on the issues of fish welfare, including the key issue of diet. We expect that the project will have a long lasting beneficial effect in support of worldwide attitudes to fish and marine creatures and the decision making of individuals in regard to their attitude to fish. The positive impact of a huge proportion of the global population changing their attitudes for the better towards fish welfare is incalculable.

## Save the Asian Elephant - Update

Duncan McNair KHS is a lawyer and the founder and CEO of Save The Asian Elephants (STAE). AIA has been following the progress of STAE's campaign for a law to stop UK travel companies selling tours where Asian elephants are treated with extreme cruelty. Here Duncan gives us the latest update on their progress.

### Duncan McNair KHS



**To witness little elephants beaten, bloodied, injured and crying, their natural lives forfeit – all in the name of tourism profits – is an outrage and a tragedy.** It is done to

"break the spirits" for easy tourism use,

reinforced throughout their remaining life in captivity by stabbings and beatings. That much of this horror is driven by the UK market is cause for national shame. *Save The Asian Elephants* (STAE) urges new UK law to ban advertising, promotion and sale of unethical venues in favour of genuine sanctuaries where elephants live as natural a life as possible, compatible with security, exhibiting natural behaviour in herds, observed by tourists at a distance safe to both.

*Save The Asian Elephant's* cause proceeds on greatly raising public awareness

of tourism exploitation, long suppressed by those profiting from it. Our research shows the widespread, systematic, violent abuse of critically endangered baby and adult Asian elephants at thousands of tourist venues across SE Asia, promoted in the UK market by hundreds of travel businesses, nearly a quarter being members of dominant industry representative ABTA (Association of British Travel Agents). When challenged, offending companies routinely cite "errors" on their website (but continue selling such places), or "we're getting round to changing" (but don't) or "we've never advertised those venues" (until shown screenshots), and so on. Candour is a very rare bird.

ABTA refuses to back STAE's call for a ban on unethical advertising - whilst urging government that light touch self-regulation will do. But the industry marking its own homework has failed for years, enabling this brutal market to flourish as elephant numbers



have crashed. ABTA's voluntary, unclear "guidelines", lacking any mechanism for monitoring, enforcement or sanction for breach have proved worthless as the commercial imperative of their members prevails.

How did the UK market sink to this? Since the 1960s, the package tour boom has fuelled intense demand for elephant attractions, triggering increased snatching of babies and calves from the wild for ruthless "breaking" and then use in riding, football, painting and "games". The UK plays a leading role in stoking demand but also in supplying tourists to the elephant home states of SE Asia, far more than any other European country (2m to India and Thailand in 2018/19). In 2016 there were 13m elephant rides in Thailand alone.

Little is done to alert tourists to the dangers posed by captive elephants tortured beyond their endurance: they attack, often fatally. Yet destinations with such records remain widely promoted in the UK market.

### **Covid and Elephant Tourism**

What of Covid? Broken tourist elephants, malnourished, routinely brutalised, held in fetid close confinement, denied any exercise (in the wild they typically walk 60km a day) are highly effective transmitters of deadly

airborne viruses like TB, SARS, Ebola, their immunological defences spent. As scientific enquiry advances, the risk they shed Covid-19 too is obvious. The people of India, home to two thirds of surviving Asian elephants, desperately struggling with Covid, are at further risk from this reckless promotion of unscrupulous venues, a perfect storm of dangers when restrictions ease. Meanwhile it is hard to sympathise with demands from those controlling tourist elephants for financial recompense for lost revenues in lockdown when so often they have grievously abused and neglected the elephants during the years of plenty. They should adapt to sustainable models, with ethical sanctuaries and humane practices that respect their "investments" rather than squander them.

### **Massive Public Outcry**

How can we so treat this ancient species, revered of Eastern religions, beloved of the whole world, yet victims of the worst cruelty of all, brought now towards the edge of extinction and the end of its long journey on Earth? As the cloak of secrecy slips to reveal the horrors, public disgust has soared. Populus polling this summer showed **90 percent of Britons** demanding an end to tourism abuse of elephants. 79 percent want STAE's new law now. STAE's petition nears **1 million**



**signatories**, with **29 million** more from aligned petitions. People and organisations from every sphere of influence, authority and celebrity in the UK back such law, including every leading faith in the UK and SE Asia and all major parties at Westminster.

### **STAE's Demand of Government**

Is Government acting, on an issue not only of rising public concern but ever more now of public health? STAE is in discussion with government at senior levels to further its policies – new law, but also joint Anglo-Indian projects to improve elephant treatment, veterinary exchange programmes, promotion of genuine sanctuaries like *Elephant Nature Park* in Thailand and tour companies such as (amongst others) the well-named *Responsible Travel*. Our aim is to steer our market from the brutal and dangerous towards sustainable and ethical, benefitting local communities as well as the beleaguered elephants.

Last October (2019) Environment Minister Zac Goldsmith helpfully asked STAE for draft legislation - the *Asian Elephants (Tourism) Bill*. At the time of writing we await progress, and a statement from Oliver Dowden, Culture and Media Secretary, responsible for advertising – and to whose department ABTA's ongoing approaches remain very unclear. Above all, collectively and in tens of millions we urge our head of government to act, before it is too late. In Joanna Lumley's words: "We say to the Prime Minister: please help end this callous abuse by making such unethical advertising illegal. We trust you make a compassionate decision. And speed is of the essence".

**AIA urges readers to contact their MPs and to write to the Prime Minister**

**Please sign STAE's petition**

For more information, visit STAE's website at:  
**[www.stae.org](http://www.stae.org)**

## Restorative Justice in Nepal

*Marian Hussenbux*



**On 3 June, we were informed about a dog brutally beaten to death in Bhaisepati, Lalitpur.**

*Animal Nepal* reported the incident to the local police station where all three men admitted their guilt. They were detained for 24 hours and released upon the agreement that they will carry out community service for one month. Two of the men will carry out daily cleaning duties at our dog treatment centre in Chobhar and the third will feed the dogs in his locality.

We could have taken this case forward legally as per Nepal's criminal code, with the men facing up to three months jail sentence. However, we opted for the community service option so that they can get to know the dogs, understand them, and hopefully realize that they have just as much right as humans to live without fear.

Most crimes against animals are committed by people who don't know any better, therefore it is crucial to not just inform them about the law but to make them understand why their actions are wrong, so that they can be the change in their own communities.

Animal Interfaith Alliance has been in communication with Animal Nepal for some years now, mainly in our support of their excellent campaigning against the Gadhimai rites every five years, in which thousands of

animals are slaughtered in the name of the goddess.

This campaign has necessitated much persistent and sensitive work by Animal Nepal, communicating with the priests, the authorities and the local community, endeavouring to make them aware that perpetrating and/or condoning such cruelty is inimical to the establishment of a compassionate and peaceful society, in which all beings are valued and respected.

We therefore welcome the enlightened decision to impose an appropriate community sentence on the three men who admitted having cruelly killed the poor dog, and are hopeful that their good experiences gained through this work will be a compassionate lesson for them to take away to others.

Radha at Animal Nepal updated us on July 20 thus:

"Often with animal cruelty cases, people commit the crimes they do purely because they don't know any better. We thought the three men were a perfect example of this, so decided to take the path of restorative justice. All three completed their month long service and were very sincere in their work. We now hope that they have taken back something positive from this and that their perception of dogs has also changed."

[www.animalnepal.org.np](http://www.animalnepal.org.np)

## VAFA Dog Shelters in Iran

*Marian Hussenbux*



**Vafa is a charitable Non-Governmental Organisation supported by grassroots donations. It runs two animal shelters in Hashtgerd and Qazvin, housing more than 1,500 dogs.**

As a not-for-profit charity, Vafa has no links to any political or religious organization. Their Mission is to build a better world where humans and animals co-exist. Cultural and awareness work, aimed at garnering support for animals, is how they achieve this.

### **Vafa's Story**

In 2003, Fatemeh Motamedi, an animal lover and caregiver, set up a NGO for the protection of animal rights in Iran. She named it *Kanoone Doostdarane Hayvanat* (Centre for Animal Lovers). Unable to bear seeing animals in pain, tortured or abused, Fatemeh's mission did not end there. She opened a shelter on a plot of land measuring 3,000 square metres in Hashtgerd, a gift from her husband. With her own money and the help of a few friends, the first dogs were received in 2004.

Vafa Animal Shelter began and still operates as a part of the officially registered Centre for Animal Lovers. Their first activities were helping injured dogs, motherless puppies, and abused dogs. The work soon expanded to offer a wide range of services.

For Vafa, Iran's first animal shelter, which faced a multitude of problems at its establishment, there was no prior experience to draw upon. Without water or electricity, without financial backing and with limited human resources, it had to face many difficulties at the beginning. But with a humane and ethical mission in place, those few people were able to work hard and use their basic resources to overcome problems and develop their work.

Vafa's shelter started in a 3,000 metre square field and their land now measures 7,000 square metres. They currently have several facilities for dogs to live and play in, many kennels, buildings specifically intended for puppies and sick and old dogs, medical facilities, a surgery and recovery room, a changing room for volunteers, kitchen and electricity.



Their work began with ten dogs. Today more than 1,200 dogs are housed in Heshtgerd alone, and they have been able to treat, castrate, vaccinate and give for adoption hundreds of dogs. They have seven full-time workers in Hashtgerd, a service worker and many volunteers. Managers of different sections of the shelter are all volunteers who selflessly give of their time and hard work for these loyal animals who are so much in need.

In 2014, a second branch was set up in Qazvin. This cares for hundreds of abused, injured and homeless dogs, using a team of experts and kind volunteers.

### Education And Raising Awareness

On Fridays, the shelter is open to the public. Seeing the hard-working volunteers and staff and the grateful eyes and wagging tails of the dogs who live there is a practical lesson in loving animals.

Donating to the shelter is in itself an act of encouragement, so that everyone can see that kindness and love for animals will have a beneficial effect on the lives of all humans and other creatures. Visitors take home with them this positive energy. The lessons they learn during their visit means that they cannot be indifferent to the pain and suffering of other creatures, and they work to reduce this.

Vafa actively tries to promote its work on social networks such as Facebook and Telegram, and to enhance education and promote awareness by publishing leaflets and posters and organizing events.

### How Did They Get Where They Are?

Their main capital so far has been the human resources of their volunteers and the selfless help of donors who have supported them over the years. To continue their work, open new branches and reach more homeless animals, they need the help of the loyal friends of "Vafa", which means 'loyalty'. Vafa's founder and team hope to make the shelter a world-class centre aimed at promoting the rights of animals.

For more information, please go to:

<https://vafashelter.com/vafa-animal-shelter/>

Please make a donation to:

<https://friendsofvafa.com/product/donation/>



## New Quaker Publication

### Ways to Kiss the Earth - Quaker Artists Explore Sustainability

Edited by Linda Murgatroyd  
Published by Quaker Arts Network



**This book presents art works by 26 contemporary Quaker artists** responding to the challenges of environmental breakdown, in a diversity of styles and media.

These are accompanied and enhanced by brief statements by the artists and an introduction. They are presented under themes of: Wonder and reverence; Spiritual and creative processes; Climate emergency; Simple and sustainable; Witness and activism. A final section illustrates the beginnings of the Loving Earth Project, a community textile project aimed at helping people to engage creatively with environmental issues without becoming overwhelmed. The book grew out of Seeking Routes, an art exhibition held in 2019 at Swarthmoor Hall in Cumbria, the 'birthplace of Quakerism'.

## Advertise in Animal Spirit

**Member organisations can  
receive an advert for free  
in each  
*Animal Spirit* magazine.**

### *Rates for non-members:*

**Quarter page - £25.00**

**Half page - £50.00**

**Full Page - £100.00**

*Includes an advert  
on the AIA website and social media.*

Contact the editor at  
[Barbgard.aia@gmail.com](mailto:Barbgard.aia@gmail.com)

## The Phyllis Mary Trust



**Do you run a small, struggling  
animal rescue centre or sanctuary?**

*If so, CCA's Phyllis Mary Trust  
may have funds that could help*

**Please see the *CCA website*  
for an application form**

**Or contact Sheila Thomas  
at [phyllismarytrust@gmail.com](mailto:phyllismarytrust@gmail.com)**

## ANIMAL INTERFAITH ALLIANCE

### FRIEND FORM

Title: Dr \_\_\_\_\_ Mr \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs \_\_\_\_\_ Ms \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

First name \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

**I wish to become a friend of the Animal Interfaith Alliance:** \_\_\_\_\_

Or – **I wish to renew my friendship of AIA:** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile number: \_\_\_\_\_

AIA will retain the personal information provided on this form as long as you remain a subscriber. We will update it whenever we hear from you that changes are needed. Unless you give us permission, we can do nothing other than keep it safe.

**Please mark here to let us know that we have your permission to contact you:**

☐ By email regarding membership matters (e.g. annual renewal)

☐ By post regarding membership matters (e.g. annual renewal)

☐ By email to send the Animal Spirit magazine

**Type of Annual Friend (please tick):**

Individual Friend £15.00 \_\_\_\_\_ or Individual Friend Concessions £7.50 \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make a donation of £ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please either make cheques payable to 'The Animal Interfaith Alliance' and send with this form to**  
*The Membership Secretary, AIA, 19 Sudeley Grove, Hardwick, Cambridge, CB23 7XS.*

**Or make bank transfers to Triodos Bank, Sort code: 16-58-10, Account number: 20530234**

**Or pay by annual standing order**

To (name of your Bank/Building Society) \_\_\_\_\_

Bank's Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

My account number is \_\_\_\_\_ Sort Code \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to give the sum of £ \_\_\_\_\_ on the 1st day of each month/year,  
 starting on \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ (Month/Year) until further notice in writing, to account number 20530234 of The Animal  
 Interfaith Alliance, Triodos Bank, sort code 16-58-10.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_