



UNION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA CONSERVATION DE LA NATURE ET DE SES RESSOURCES
INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

CETACEAN SPECIALIST GROUP

19 November 2011

Mr Jagdish Patil
Managing Director
Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation
C.D.O. Hutments,
Opp. L.I.C.(Yogakshema) Building,
Madame Cama Road, Mumbai-400 020

SUBJECT: Maharashtra 'Sea World'

Dear Mr Patil:

Colleagues in the Subcontinent have brought to my attention that the Maharashtra government has approved the development of a 'Sea World' park as part of a 510 Crore tourism development project along the Konkan coast. As you know, there is much interest, and concern, around the world about the state of marine life, and in particular marine mammals including whales and dolphins. I am aware of the potential educational and economic benefits of a tourism development such as this, but also of the potential for controversy surrounding questions of conservation or animal welfare.

As Chair of the IUCN Cetacean Specialist Group, I may be asked to provide advice to government agencies, international organisations, companies involved in the supply of animals for captivity, and other groups, concerning this new development, particularly if it is to involve the holding and display of dolphins. I am sending along with this letter a publication that might be relevant and of interest to you, and I would also urge you to have a look at our website (<http://www.iucn-csg.org/>) where other relevant information is available.

Thus far, the information I have received on the Maharashtra 'Sea World' has come only via newspaper articles, which of course can be partial, slanted or otherwise unreliable. Therefore I would appreciate receiving authoritative information on the project from you. Specifically, can you confirm that the holding and display of dolphins is part of the plan, and if so, can you advise

on which species are to be held and from what population(s) they are to be sourced. Would it be possible to obtain from you the relevant specifications (infrastructure, expertise, etc.) intended to be in place to can ensure the survival and good health of the captive animals?

Your timely response would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randall Reeves". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Randall Reeves

cc: Dena Cator (IUCN, Gland)

Randall Reeves, Chairman
27 Chandler Lane
Hudson, Quebec
JOP 1H0 CANADA

Phone: 450 458 6685
Fax: 450 458 7383
Email: rrr Reeves@okapis.ca