CAN WE GUARANTEE THE WELFARE OF BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (Tursiops truncatus) IN CAPTIVITY?





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INTRODUCTION

The maintenance of bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) in captivity is a very controversial issue at present.

We must try to move away from anthropomorphism and focus on the "umwelt" of the species.

The Five Domains Model for animal welfare includes:

- 1 NUTRITION
- 2 ENVIRONMENT
- 3 HEALTH
- 4 BEHAVIOURAL INTERACTIONS
- 5 MENTAL STATE

The factors included in the first four domains give rise to experiences that affect the fifth domain (mental state).

OBJECTIVES

The main objective is to determine if we can guarantee the welfare of bottlenose dolphin in captivity by analyzing:

- the biological requirements they have
- the problems associated with captivity
- the <u>indicators</u> we have to evaluate their <u>welfare</u>

through the first four domains (nutrition, environment, health and behavior) of the five domains model.



- Absence of prolonged hunger or thirst
- Adequate diet
- Adequate food quality
- Adequate food variety
- Safe environment
- Adequate pool dimensions, design and complexity
- Not kept isolated
- Water quality
- Temperature, ambient noise, ambient light

- Medical training
- Preventive medicine program
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- Complete veterinary exam
- Records of previous incidents/lesions/diseases

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- Positive interactions with:
 - Their environment
 - Other non-human animals
 - Humans
- Presence of species-specific behaviours
- Absence of abnormal behaviours

CONCLUSIONS

- There are many welfare indicators that allow us to assess the welfare of bottlenose dolphins in captivity.
- The indicators have certain limitations.
- It is difficult to generalize.
- More studies are needed.

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