AMEND or IMPROVE BILL S-2013

Submitted by Dr Ingrid N. Visser as Appendix #6, to the Canadian Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, with respect to Bill S-203.

SUMMARY:

Allow for cetaceans to be moved into or out of Canada to approved Sanctuaries.

Allow for appropriate and approved moving of cetacean samples for scientific purposes.

SANCTUARIES

The amendment made to the OSPCA Act, O. Reg 60/90, expressly does not include any mention of exporting an orca out of Ontario. Therefore Kiska the lone orca at Marineland can be moved to another facility or a Sanctuary.

However Bill S-203, if implemented as it stands now, would prevent export of an orca (or any other cetacean) to a Sanctuary. I am therefore of the opinion that Bill S-203 should be amended to allow for cetaceans to be exported, but only when the purpose is to improve welfare, for instance in the case of genuine rehabilitation and that the export is to an approved Sanctuary.

By Sanctuary I mean a facility that, for instance, meets the requirements of the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, which inter alia includes no breeding and not being used for-profit or in theatrical displays.

Currently, there is a blatant misuse of rescued cetaceans, by the captivity industry – I have records of 13 facilities who have taken a rescued cetacean and used them for breeding, trade or in theatrical style shows. That is not a rescue, that is a repurposing of an animal who was in need and using them for commercial profit.

SAMPLES

As a scientist, I’ve shipped cetacean samples to Canada to be analysed – Canada has some remarkable scientists whom I’ve collaborated with. Therefore, I agree with the experts from CITES that there should be an opportunity for appropriate samples to be shipped in and out of the country. This should, however, include the caveat that those samples are not to be used for commercial purposes and not to be used towards the breeding of cetaceans in captivity.