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A Brief Note on Animal Welfare

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Description

The well-being of non-human animals is referred to as animal welfare. Formal standards of animal welfare vary depending on context but are primarily debated by animal welfare organisations, legislators and academics. Animal welfare science employs measures such as longevity, disease, immunosuppression, behaviour, physiology and reproduction though which of these best indicate animal welfare is debatable.

Caring for animal welfare is frequently based on the belief that domesticated animals are self-aware and that their well-being or suffering should be considered, especially when they are in human care. Implications may include how animals are slaughtered for food, how they are used in scientific research, how they are protected (as pets in zoos, farms, circuses, and so on), and how human activities affect animal welfare and survival.

Animals in shelters can be returned to their owners, adopted, transferred to another shelter or rescue facility, or euthanized. When a stray animal found and housed at a shelter is picked up by its owner, this is referred to as return to owner. Most animal shelters use adoption, which involves giving or selling an animal in their care to someone who will keep and care for it. Some shelters work with rescue organisations, donating an animal to the rescue rather than adopting it. Some jurisdictions require shelters to collaborate with rescues, while others use rescues to offload animals with health or behavioural issues that they cannot handle. The method of slaughter, particularly ritual slaughter, is another source of concern for the welfare of farm animals. While not all animal killing causes pain, the general public believes that killing an animal reduces its welfare. This raises additional concerns about premature slaughtering, such as chick culling by the laying hen industry, in which males are slaughtered immediately after hatching because they are superfluous this policy is followed by other farmed animal industries, such as goat and cattle milk production, raising similar concerns.

Cetaceans in captivity are kept for display research and naval operations. Humans improve their welfare by feeding them dead but disease-free fish protecting them from predators and injury monitoring their health and providing activities for behavioural enrichment. Some are housed in lagoons with natural soil and vegetation on the sides. The majority are housed in concrete tanks which are easy to clean but reflect their natural sounds back to them. They are unable to form their own social groups and related cetaceans are typically separated for breeding and display. Military dolphins used in naval operations swim freely during operations and training but return to pens when not needed. Captive cetaceans are trained to present themselves above their blow holes for blood samples health exams and noninvasive breath samples. Employees are able to monitor unshielded propellers on boat engines can also cause serious injuries to cetaceans who come into contact with them.

Aside from cetaceans the welfare of other wild animals has been studied though to a lesser extent than that of farm animals. Wild animal welfare research is divided into two areas the welfare of wild animals kept in captivity and the welfare of animals living in the wild. The former has addressed the situation of animals kept for human consumption such as in zoos or circuses as well as in rehabilitation centres. The latter has investigated how humans or natural factors causing wild animal suffering affect the welfare of non-domesticated animals living in wild or urban areas.

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