



# WILD WELFARE

Helping make all zoos,  
good zoos



# SUMMARY

Zoos and aquariums can play an integral role in all our lives with the power to shape the way we feel and care for animals, while influencing change in attitudes and action towards the protection of our global fauna and flora. Unfortunately, not all zoos are equal and as a result of poor care, real animal suffering is prevalent around the world. It is likely only a small percentage of the estimated more than 10,000 zoos and aquariums that exist globally fall under country-wide animal welfare legislation or guiding principles from a zoo association.

A much more significant number fall outside any such protection, so despite significant advances in animal welfare science, poor animal welfare is still widely observed in many zoos around the world. Every year Wild Welfare's projects support welfare improvements for thousands of wild animals living in captivity in zoos and aquariums around the world.

**OUR MISSION IS TO  
UNITE THE WORLD'S  
LEADING ZOOS AND  
ANIMAL WELFARE  
ORGANISATIONS TO  
IMPROVE THE WELFARE  
OF CAPTIVE WILD  
ANIMALS AROUND THE  
WORLD.**



Our work is helping a whole range of species from large mammals including carnivores, primates and monkeys to reptiles and exotic birds by encouraging improvements in animal care practices to bringing in new facility, regional and national welfare policies and regulations. Through support, training & positive partnerships, we help improve animal welfare where it is needed the most.

Our aim is to achieve what we all want to see: a world where every zoo and aquarium promotes the highest standards of animal care and welfare. From rehoming bears in Japan to training veterinarians in Indonesia, our work is varied and vast but we have one focus: improving care and welfare for wild animals living in captivity around the world.

# OUR HISTORY

"Wild Welfare was established in 2012 and has rapidly established itself as an internationally recognised hub of expertise in zoo animal welfare reform, forming effective collaborative relationships with a number of zoos, regional zoo associations, animal welfare NGOs, reputable universities and professional bodies. It is the first project-led captive wild animal welfare initiative that is solely focused on improving welfare standards by uniting zoos and animal welfare NGOs around the world.

We play a pivotal role in the on-going improvement of animal welfare in zoos as well as providing critical support to other institutions that want to end unacceptable wild animal welfare practices.

The issue of poor wild animal welfare and abuse cannot be resolved single-handedly. However, together we can make a real effort to improve the welfare for many wild animals around the world, and collectively help change minds, attitudes and practices.



We help facilitate positive dialogue between zoo professionals, zoo associations and global animal welfare NGOs, creating a positive international captive animal welfare movement through an informed expert approach and the establishment of strong partnerships between key stakeholders.

We strongly believe in a creative and compassionate approach to captive wild animal welfare, and our up to date, scientific-led materials and resources encompass the ethics, ethology, and husbandry pertaining to captive wild animals."

Dr David Jones, Founder & Chairman

# THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE

The exact number of zoos and zoological type exhibits and collections around the world is actually unknown. It is however believed that only a small percentage of these fall within some form of organised ethical and welfare framework. Sadly, poor captive animal welfare is often widely prevalent within the institutions that fall outside of recognised welfare standards, resulting in the suffering of thousands of animals.

As more developing countries try and attain animals and collections that western society has previously dictated, our efforts to ensure animal welfare concepts and high standards of care are provided, is needed even more now than ever.

From a conservation perspective, globally, zoos significantly contribute to a diverse conservation effort, uniting to address the decline of a vast number of species and habitats. However, under-developed zoos, often found in countries struggling to manage regional declines in biodiversity, have limited expertise and resources to contribute to these programmes, limiting the value of the global effort. Finally, captive wild animal collections around the world with poor standards of animal welfare, can also be participants and recipients in the burgeoning illicit wildlife trade.



## THE WELFARE PROBLEM

Societal and zoo community interest in the welfare of animals in zoos is at an all-time high and rightly or wrongly, accessible information means that zoos are more easily criticised on their animal care, education and conservation conduct. Some very poor zoos where extreme welfare concerns exist are increasingly being highlighted within the national media and targeted by international and a growing national animal welfare community.

And the welfare problem is real and vast. A lack of coherent and relevant institutional and national regulations can result in poorly managed facilities, exacerbated by poor basic care and a lack of visitor respect or awareness. Keepers within many zoos have basic or no animal management backgrounds, and veterinary expertise and care is extremely limited for the specialist care sometimes required within an exotic captive collection.

The result is the continued suffering of animals, frustration and limited training for zoo staff and inadequate protection legislation, monitoring and evaluation of animal welfare management.

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# HOW DOES WILD WELFARE IMPROVE ANIMAL WELFARE?

Wild Welfare recognizes the value of zoos to conservation, education and communities, but the success of this value is underpinned by good animal welfare. Through our innovative work we bring the welfare of captive wild animals to the forefront of public and policy agendas around the world where it is needed the most. By reaching facilities others haven't been able to, we build critical relationships and provide on-going welfare guidance through a highly structured strategy and process.

Our approach galvanises a collaborative and compassionate approach from leading zoos, aquariums and animal welfare NGOs to take innovative action towards bettering animal welfare policies and practices.

We create a united body of experts and resources who are willing to tackle the significant issue of captive wild animal welfare around the world. We strongly believe that long-term solutions are best sought through positive dialogue and action.

Zoos and aquariums underpin the critical role that zoo professionals have in driving improvements in captive wild animal welfare around the world. It requires the combined effort of both experts within the zoo and global animal welfare communities to provide an effective, urgent and experienced response that provides practical and enduring solutions.

Wild Welfare brings together a team of professionals with experience-based expertise in assessing and improving wild animal welfare and husbandry issues. The challenge is considerable and addressing wild animal welfare is, and will remain, complicated. Through bringing together a range of skills, views, networks and resources, we can make a real difference in improving the welfare of many wild animals around the world, and collectively help to change minds, attitudes and practices.



# We Are Unique



## We are not a campaigning organisation

We make change happen. While lobbying and campaigning can be effective, we choose instead to work together with those key people who have the ability to make positive change for animals. Whether that is other NGOs like us, zoo directors, zoo keepers or government authorities, we build positive relationships and work on getting to the heart of the problem, providing the expert support that will make a difference to animals' lives.

## We work with leading zoos, academic and animal welfare organisations.

We work with all those working in the zoo and animal welfare fields who are also committed to making positive welfare changes through research and reform. We believe in supporting institutions and individuals making educated changes that result in improved animal welfare practices. We are reaching facilities others haven't been able to, proving that a positive, inclusive approach rather than negative condemnation is key to making a difference to the lives of wild animals in captivity

## We respect cultural differences but don't let them become an excuse for poor welfare

We embrace different cultures, values and behaviours, but use the most up to date animal welfare research to make improvements, helping ensure harmful, outdated practices become a thing of the past, while encouraging positive cultural action for the future.

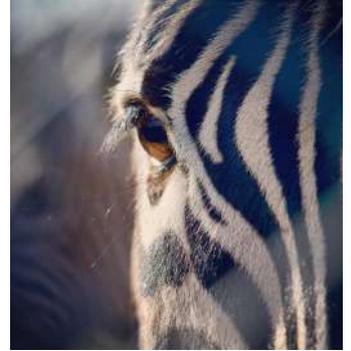
## We do not "prop up" bad zoos.

We continually assess the feasibility of success in regard to the facilities we work with and are collaborating on models to identify zoo support or closure. We choose to work with facilities that can act as ambassador zoos and have a wider impact within their country.

# SOME OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

In 2019 alone, we were active in ten different countries. From national and zoo association animal welfare standard support and direct zoo support, we've helped make sustainable animal welfare improvements happen around the world.

Not only are we active out in the field, but we also work on exciting resources and learning materials, public awareness resources. Below are just a few of our achievements in 2019.



## Rollout of the SEAZA welfare certification programme

This is a first for the SE Asian region, and one that Wild Welfare has been significantly involved in helping develop and oversee. The auditing programme has progressed through 2019 and we've been delighted to see it having an impact already, not only with tangible animal welfare improvements, but in the enthusiastic uptake in embracing the programme by a number of the different associations across the region.

## Adoption of certification programme in Vietnam

Adoption of the South East Asian Zoo Association programme into the Vietnam Zoo Association constitution happened during our December workshop with the VZA. The result will mean that not only Vietnam SEAZA members will benefit from the welfare programme in the future, but also all the VZA members, helping increase standards within the country.

## Development of our Partner 4 Animals Programme

Rolled out in one country in 2019 and a further three countries identified for 2020. This links leading institutions with facilities looking for support, often involving the regional zoo association so that the Partnership can expand to other facilities too. Wild Welfare acts as the facilitator for this programme and we've seen some fantastic changes within the Thailand zoos that we've already worked with.

## New national and international research collaboration

We've carried out new collaborations with a number of national and international academic bodies to further on-going and new research projects that underwrite the work that we do. Providing research reports to policy makers and stakeholders on why animal welfare reform is required is essential to ensure credible evidence based content is used that is up to date.

## In the past few years :

**440**

ZOOS SUPPORTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY

**1700**

PEOPLE TRAINED IN ANIMAL WELFARE CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES

**30**

WELFARE ASSESSMENTS CARRIED OUT AS PART OF OUR ONGOING WELFARE PROGRAMMES

# SOME OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

## New programmes reaching more facilities

In 2019 we started a programme in China, thanks to our collaboration with Animals Asia Foundation who are already very active in the country. China are showing an increased interest in animal welfare programmes and we are excited to be supporting AAF's ongoing activities in China moving forward. We are also expanding into other countries in 2020 as the demand for our work continues.

## Progress in Japan at the national level

We had multiple projects happening in Japan in 2019, including continued training of JAZA member facilities, a new partnership with Nippon University of Life Sciences to carry out research on Japan's animal cafes and ongoing partnerships with two individual facilities where we provided bespoke support.

## Award nominations

This year our Executive Director was shortlisted for the CEVA UK animal welfare charity person of the year 2019 award. Our short film "Imagine If" also was nominated and shortlisted for a charity film award.

## Development of interactive learning programme

The e-learning programme has been rapidly developing over the second half of the year. Once finished, it will be a resource which will empower a large number of learners across the globe to understand animal welfare concepts and take action for improvement.

## Public engagement learning short video

Engaging the public with straightforward animal welfare concepts and building people's empathy for animals is key to encouraging a greater understanding of what constitutes good and poor welfare.



# WILD WELFARE IN ACTION

## Case Study A:

### Welfare Certification in Zoos in South East Asia

Throughout 2017 and 2018, Wild Welfare was instrumental in developing the South East Asian Zoos and Aquariums Association (SEAZA)'s welfare certification programme. In 2019, Wild Welfare helped implement the welfare certification programme in collaboration with the SEAZA that will improve care and welfare for animals within their member zoos, with a knock-on effect to those zoos in the region who are not yet SEAZA members.

*This new welfare certification programme is helping improve care and welfare for thousands of animals housed in SEAZA's 50-strong zoo and aquarium membership.*



As part of this pilot programme, Wild Welfare has trained and oversaw the zoo audits in a number of SE Asian countries. The auditing process involves raising findings and observations and then working with the zoo to develop a timeline for corrective action. Once these actions have taken place SEAZA Ethics and Welfare Committee consider a recommendation for a zoo's certification.

**"I have gained more experience about animal welfare and the principles of welfare standards that will help develop animal welfare in all ZPO zoos and The Many other zoos in Thailand."**

**Dr Visit D.V.M., Assistant Director of ZPO's Dusit Zoo**



# WILD WELFARE IN ACTION

## Case Study B:

### Partner for Animals Programme

The very first Partner for Animals programme started in 2019, where we facilitated a partnership between North Carolina Zoo, USA, and Zoological Parks Organisation (ZPO), Thailand.

Wild Welfare's Partner for Animals programme aims to partner experienced zoo staff from some of the world's leading zoos, with zoos around the world that are looking for support to help them improve their animal care and welfare practices.

ZPO have seven zoos under their management so it was a great opportunity for the programme to have a far reaching impact on many thousands of animals. Having a good relationship with both institutions, Wild Welfare was able to help develop the partnership between North Carolina Zoo and ZPO.

*Practical, hands-on teamwork is key to this programme. Wild Welfare positions zoo keeping staff from leading zoos with overseas zoos and their teams and together they carry out species-specific animal welfare improvements, in areas such as veterinary, environment, enrichment and nutrition.*



The first field trip was a great success with the ZPO and North Carolina Zoo teams bonding well, and the dialogue being open and honest which allowed for husbandry and management changes to be made easily. There were opportunities to share knowledge on enrichment, husbandry, training and nutrition and during the first trip, long-term plans were drawn up for this three-year programme. The communication is continuing with great effect as we see ZPO staff continue to develop. Plans are in place for a return visit to assist ZPO members achieve SEAZA certification in 2020.

*"A vital part of the Partner for Animals programme is to ensure the zoo team we work with overseas know it is a true partnership and that our aim is to work together, not dictate to them. This partnership focus is key to each project's success and ultimately the most positive outcomes for the zoo animals we are aiming to help."*

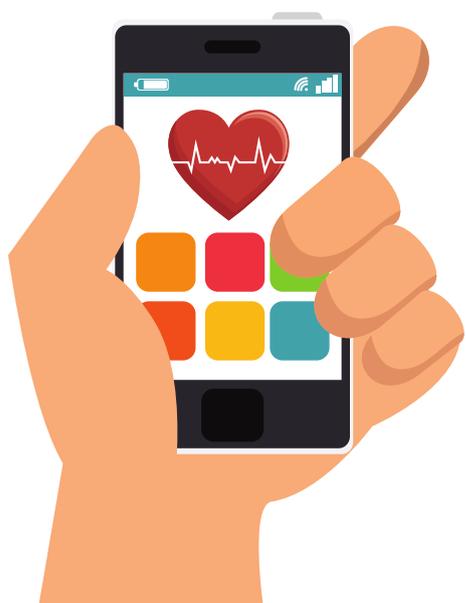
**Georgina Groves, Wild Welfare  
Founder/Animal Welfare Consultant**



# PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Our plans are ambitious, but they need to be. Our long-term plan aims to build on our current animal welfare action in multiple countries, supporting the development of global animal welfare policy and welfare-based accreditation. We will be delivering on our “One Community” programme emphasising the importance of community development to safeguard the health and welfare of people, animals and the environment.

**Our approach aims to be as strategic as possible, impacting thousands of animals through a capacity building and policy led approach, that brings together the expertise from the leading zoos and animal welfare communities to identify solutions and collaborate where it matters.**



We believe that education and the resulting behaviour change is the key to long-term and sustainable improvements in captive animal welfare. This is a cross cutting theme in all of our programmes which places capacity building, skill development and knowledge-sharing, with people who are in the position to make a positive impact on the welfare of captive wild animals, at the core.

We also recognise the important role that technology can play in providing global access to learning materials and as such we are developing online e-learning resources, including course materials, videos and smart software, enabling the public, zoos and NGOs alike to participate and help influence the call for change.

# FUNDING

**"It is our vision to end the suffering of captive wild animals around the world, ensuring full and sustainable protection is given to all animals in human care."**

In order to meet our vision and provide services in the zoo community, we rely on the generosity of our supporters to continue our work, developing highly skilled networks and teams to address global welfare conditions found in zoos.

**IN 2021 OUR GOAL IS  
TO RAISE £275,000**



## WAYS YOUR SUPPORT HELPS US



Supports a wide and diverse range of zoos and aquariums around the world to improve their animal welfare through on-going training and capacity development. We develop skills in animal husbandry and assessment teaching and sharing knowledge and information of all aspects of captive management while building relationships which can lead to further academic, government and research collaboration.

**Encourages a global reduction in poor welfare practices** and improvements in animal welfare understanding in all the facilities we work directly and indirectly with, and a reduction in acute, detrimental welfare practices such as circuses, and animal abuse.

**Development of Animal Welfare competency programmes** within countries where they currently don't exist, based on international standards that can be used to evaluate, monitor and ensure compliance to high standards of animal care

**Development and dispersal of novel and accessible educational tools and smart software technology** that encourages participation in engaging learning programmes on animal care.

**Development of technical and legislative zoo welfare standards** adopted where there currently are none by national legislators and implemented in a nationwide programme.

**Empowerment of professional and public communities** and support globally accredited welfare initiatives that provide long term solutions not just quick fixes

# TESTIMONIALS

## A FEW FROM AROUND THE WORLD

"I have known Wild Welfare since 2016 and I really appreciate the work they do, particularly in training and assessment. There's no perfect zoo in the world so we have to improve and Wild Welfare has supported that a lot. We have seen facilities, animal welfare and even animal behaviours being changed in a very good way."

Hoang Bui – Vietnam Zoo Association  
member 2019

"The advice from Wild Welfare has been a fantastic support in helping us develop a comprehensive animal welfare programme which will help our animals, staff and hopefully inspire our visitors!"

Brazilian Zoo Workshop delegate 2019

"Much of the Japanese general public who claim to be "animal-lovers" tend to focus their attention on companion animal issues. The work that Wild Welfare does in Japan casts light on wildlife in captivity, a group of animals that tends to be overlooked by the Japanese public and supports the endeavour of Japanese zoo and aquarium stakeholders to improve the welfare of these animals. Wild Welfare is contributing to the domestic scene by creating momentum for the changes that are much needed for the betterment of the lives of these animals."

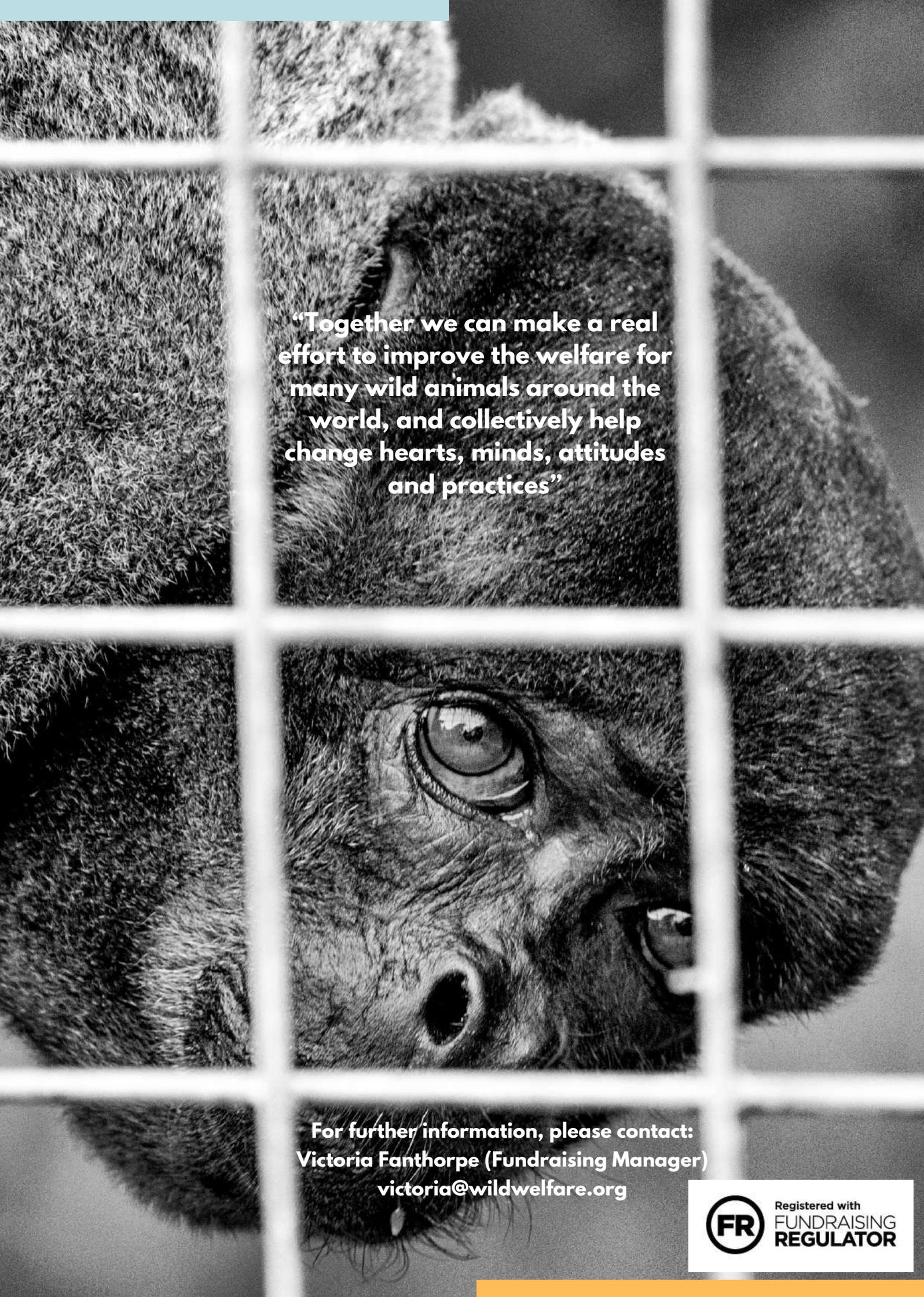
Animal Literacy Institute, Japan 2019

"Wild Welfare's pragmatic, hands-on approach directly addresses challenges to captive animal welfare by forging collaborative partnerships that build motivation for change"

Margaret Whittaker, Creative Animal  
Solutions

"We are excited to be collaborating with Wild Welfare and AZAB in developing the Partner for Animals programme, aiming to create a community of animal welfare specialists across Brazilian zoos and Aquariums."

Dr Jason Watters, San Francisco Zoo.



**“Together we can make a real effort to improve the welfare for many wild animals around the world, and collectively help change hearts, minds, attitudes and practices”**

**For further information, please contact:  
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