

On Behalf of the Undersigned

October 9, 2025

The Honourable Michael Kerzner
Solicitor General of Ontario
25 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y6

Dear Solicitor General Kerzner,

Re: Mass euthanasia of beluga whales kept at Marineland Canada

We are cetacean specialists, veterinarians, and researchers from across Canada and around the world with extensive experience in the care, biology, and welfare of marine mammals.

We understand that Marineland is making efforts to sell the land on which its amusement park once operated, which currently includes the presence of 30 beluga whales housed on the property. Marineland recently applied for permits to export all 30 of the whales to Chimelong Ocean Kingdom in China, a request that was denied by federal Fisheries Minister Joanne Thompson. In light of that denial, and claims of diminishing access to financial resources, Marineland has recently begun making public threats to euthanize all 30 of the whales in its care.

In view of the foregoing, we believe there is an urgent need for the government to intervene to protect these animals from the prolonged and significant suffering that would inevitably result from an attempt to kill them en masse.

Beluga whales in the wild live in small, strongly bonded groups that join, from time-to-time, with larger aggregations of individuals. Adult females are intensely bonded with their newborns as well as with older offspring and other family members. Family groups are critically important to their stability and, in the wild, females work together to create nursery groups in which juveniles are cared for and protected. Bonded groups are held together and organized by complex communication and, at times, shared calls, across individuals. Beluga whales are highly intelligent and emotionally sophisticated animals who become highly stressed when their social group is disturbed. There is published evidence of helping and grieving behaviour.

In summary, significant scientific evidence indicates that if the beluga whales at Marineland are killed, it will become evident to those animals in the other tanks. The relatives and friends of the belugas being killed will become highly agitated and distressed. As such, the process of killing all 30 animals would cause fear and profound psychological suffering across the population, which would be prolonged as each whale is left to wait their turn to be subjected to a fatal injection. This simply cannot be justified on any sound basis.

We urge you to intervene to prevent Marineland from following through on its threat and to ensure that Ontario's animal protection laws are upheld.

Sincerely,

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cc: Premier Doug Ford
 Michael Harris, MPP

Citations

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