

Fundacion Mundo Marino
Dr. Ricardo Bastida
San Clemente del Tuyú
Argentina

University of Bielefeld
Department for Ethology
Morgenbreede 45
W-4800 Bielefeld, FRG

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Dear Dr. Bastida,

my congratulation for the successful rehabilitation of the stranded killer whale. In my opinion it does not make any sense to bring this animal back to the ocean. Let me list up several arguments for this opinion.

1. From the ecological point of view the release of a single animal does not contribute to the survival of a species. As long as it is clear that this animal stranded without human influence it is a victim of natural selection and humans should not interfere in this process. The method of releasing animals should only be used for highly endangered species as a last way for their rescue (see guidelines of the IUCN). *Orcinus orca* is not such a species. Till today we can not calculate the influence that animals kept temporarily in human care have on their wild conspecifics.

2. Releasing an Orca does not just mean to throw it back to the ocean. If the project should have any chance of success it must be very well prepared. This needs the involvement of many experts in this field and costs a lot of time and money. At minimum you would need a year. Even if everything is prepared perfectly the chance that the animal would survive is very very small. For this reason social living animals like e.g. primates are usually only released as socially functional groups. Single animals would not have a chance to survive. The same would be true for cetaceans. So to put such an amount of work and money into this project would be a waste.

From the animals point of view it would mean to send it back to death

My suggestion is to keep this animal at Mundo Marino for educational, research and breeding

their conspecifics in the wild would have a more positive effect for the wild population than any releasing activities.



I hope this short statement will help you to find a decision,

sincerely yours