



Ban on circus performances with wild mammals

As of 15 September 2015, the use of wild mammals will no longer be permitted in circus acts, or other performances. Transportation of these animals for performance purposes will also be banned.

The reason for this ban

Despite great dedication on the part of animal caretakers and trainers, conditions for wild mammals in circuses place severe restrictions on their ability to engage in natural behaviour. Circus conditions also place a strain on other aspects of animal health and welfare. This issue results from such factors as continual travel, training and performances. The value of public entertainment does not outweigh the detriments such conditions pose to the animals. This ban has been introduced with these considerations in mind.

Who does this ban apply to?

Circus acts

This ban applies to any circuses wishing to use wild mammals in their acts. A circus is an itinerant entertainment organization, which is generally on tour, or consists of a collection of acts.

Other performances

This ban also applies to anyone wishing to use wild mammals in performances, such as those for:

- Parties or events (e.g. markets and Carnival)
- Private in-home entertainment
- The purpose of creating advertisements, films or television programmes
- Amusement parks
- Entertainment in parades

Transportation

Transportation of wild mammals for the purpose of including them in circus acts or other performances in the Netherlands will also be banned as of 15 September 2015.

Exceptions

Animals

The following mammals will be permitted to perform in circus acts: donkeys, horses, dogs, cats, cows, sheep, goats, pigs, llamas, alpacas, camels, dromedaries, rabbits, brown rats, domestic mice, guinea pigs, golden hamsters and gerbils.

Species in other animal classes will also be permitted to perform in circuses, including birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects.

Zoos and marine mammal parks

Wild mammal performances will be permitted in zoos and marine mammal parks.

Transportation

The ban provides for one exception regarding the transportation of wild mammals used in circus and other performance acts. Foreign companies and entrepreneurs are permitted to transport these animals through the Netherlands, provided that they do not perform in the Netherlands.

Supervision and enforcement

The Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) is responsible for the actual monitoring, supervision and enforcement of this ban. This ban is enforceable under administrative regulations and criminal law. More information is available at:

www.nvwa.nl