

Media release
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Vancouver Aquarium should end cetacean captivity now

Vancouver – The Vancouver Humane Society (VHS) says the Vancouver Aquarium should end cetacean captivity now and not import more beluga whales to the facility.

VHS says the aquarium’s announcement that it will import several belugas and put them on display until 2029 appears to be a tactic to pre-empt a potential decision by the Vancouver Park Board to end cetacean captivity much sooner.

VHS spokesperson Peter Fricker said the aquarium should not waste its resources on expanding its captive cetacean facility. “The tanks should stay empty and the money should instead be used to work with the Whale Sanctuary Project.” The [Whale Sanctuary Project](#) is a non-profit group of scientists and other professionals working on the development of a seaside sanctuary for whales and dolphins who might be retired from entertainment facilities or rescued from injury or sickness in the wild.

VHS is also concerned that the aquarium may use its rescue program as a loophole to acquire cetaceans for its new facility. “We worry that rather than aim for genuine rescue and release, the aquarium will aim for rescue and retain. They haven’t promised to end captivity, only the display of belugas.”

VHS is skeptical about the aquarium’s claims to use the imported belugas for research. A [report](#) published by VHS and Zoocheck found that the value of the aquarium’s captive cetacean research to date is questionable.

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