



An international organization dedicated to conservation through public display and conservation.

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**Statement on Vancouver Park Board's Devastating Decision to Prohibit
Vancouver Aquarium from Caring for Beluga Whales**

The Vancouver Park Board's proposed amendment to prohibit the Vancouver Aquarium from having marine mammals on public display is a devastating loss for wildlife and impedes the critical rescue and rehabilitation work, scientific studies, ocean conservation and public education efforts of the Aquarium, one of the most respected and prestigious zoological institutions in the world.

Experts with the Aquarium's Marine Mammal Research Centre are on the frontlines of rescue efforts and science to help save beluga whales living in the Arctic, which is a rapidly changing environment. These efforts are especially vital for the beluga whales in the St. Lawrence Estuary where the population of about 800 animals is declining each year.

"This decision is a loss for wildlife. The Vancouver Aquarium's work—much of which is not possible with wild populations—results in much needed science that guides programs ranging from the rescue of stranded animals to policies that help protect wild populations," said Alliance President and CEO Kathleen Dezio. "A prohibition on the public display of marine mammals at Vancouver Aquarium will likely lead to the deterioration of the aquarium's expertise, resources and ability to continue to perform its critical conservation work."

An accredited member of the [Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums](#), Vancouver meets rigorous standards of animal care and conservation and provides important educational experiences for its visitors.

For most of the public, the first time they see belugas in person and learn about their ecosystem and wildlife conservation is at Alliance-accredited member facilities like Vancouver. These educational and inspirational experiences visitors have at Alliance member facilities have helped foster an appreciation for these animals and the threats they face in the wild.

Accredited members of the Alliance meet or exceed rigorous Standards & Guidelines covering a dozen different areas from animal husbandry, animal training, and water and environmental quality to education, scientific research, breeding, transportation and more. These standards, based on the expertise of thousands of veterinarians, animal care specialists, operations personnel, and scientists throughout the world, are meant to optimize the physical health of and environmental conditions for individual marine mammals in each facility's care and maximize their educational and scientific impact.

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About AMMPA

The Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums is an international association of marine life parks, aquariums, zoos, research facilities, and professional organizations dedicated to the highest standards of care for marine mammals and to their conservation in the wild through public education and scientific research