



About Animals Asia

Who we are

Animals Asia is devoted to ending the barbaric practice of bear bile farming and improving the welfare of animals in China and Vietnam. We promote compassion and respect for all animals and work to bring about long-term change.

The Animals Asia team has been rescuing bears since 1994 and is the only organisation with a bear sanctuary in China. Our founder and CEO, Jill Robinson MBE, Dr.med.vet. h.c., is widely recognised as the world's leading expert on the cruel bear bile industry, having campaigned against it since 1993.

Our work

Our work focuses on three major programmes:

End Bear Bile Farming

Animals Asia works to end the barbaric bear bile trade, which sees over 10,000 bears – mainly moon bears but also sun bears and brown bears – kept on bile farms in China, and around 1,200 in Vietnam.

Cat and Dog Welfare

Animals Asia works to end the trade in dogs and cats for food in China, and lobbies to improve the welfare of companion animals and promote humane population management.

Captive Animal Welfare

Animals Asia campaigns for an end to abusive animal practices in zoos and safari parks in China, and works closely with governing authorities to improve animal management and increase awareness of the welfare needs of captive animals.



End Bear Bile Farming

More than 10,000 bears – mainly moon bears, but also sun bears and brown bears – are kept on bile farms in China, and around 1,200 in Vietnam. The bears are milked regularly for their bile, which is used in traditional medicine.

Bile is extracted using various painful, invasive techniques, all of which cause massive infection in the bears. This cruel practice continues despite the availability of a large number of effective and affordable herbal and synthetic alternatives.

Most farmed bears are kept in tiny cages. In China, the cages are sometimes so small that the bears are unable to turn around or stand on all fours. Some bears are put into cages as cubs and never released. Bears may be kept caged like this for up to 30 years. Most farmed bears are starved, dehydrated and suffer from multiple diseases and malignant tumours that ultimately kill them.

Focus areas

1 Bear sanctuaries

We operate bear sanctuaries in China and Vietnam where bears are rehabilitated and cared for and where our bear teams gather vital evidence of the effects of bile extraction.

2 Reducing demand

We engage with the traditional medicine community and other users of bile to promote herbal and synthetic alternatives and reduce demand.

3 The bile trade

We monitor the changing trends in the trade of bear bile and parts, keeping track of the producers, sellers and end consumers of bear products and working to maintain up-to-date intelligence on the location, size and workings of the bear bile industry.

4 Public awareness

We run extensive public awareness campaigns in China and Vietnam to highlight the cruelty of the industry and build support for an end to bear bile farming.

5 Government and policy

We engage with government authorities, public representatives and policy-makers in China, Vietnam and internationally to build support for an end to bear bile farming.



Cat and Dog Welfare

Cats and dogs in China are often abandoned and left to subsist on the streets, with many dying due to illness or accidents. Government authorities organise brutal dog-killing campaigns to try to reduce stray dog populations. Stray dogs and cats are also snatched from the streets and taken to horrific meat markets, where they are sold for human consumption and often suffer a slow, violent death.

Focus areas

1 Empowering local groups

We provide funding and training to around 100 animal welfare groups in China that rescue dogs and cats and undertake other welfare initiatives that directly help companion animals.

2 Humane population management

We promote humane population management and disease-control measures by running symposiums and providing funds and training for TNR (trap, neuter, release) programmes for street cats.

3 The meat trade

We conduct investigations into live animal markets, dog slaughterhouses and restaurants across China to catalogue abuse and inform the government and public of the cruelty, illegality and human health concerns surrounding the industry.

4 Public awareness

We run extensive public awareness campaigns on cat and dog issues and use a number of innovative methods to spread the message that dogs and cats are our friends not food.

5 Government and policy

We engage with government authorities, public representatives and policy-makers in China to support an end to dog and cat eating and to build support for laws that will protect companion animals from cruelty.



Captive Animal Welfare

Animals in China's zoos and safari parks suffer a range of abuses. In many places, terrified cows, pigs and chickens are fed to lions and tigers as live prey for entertainment. Captive wild animals are often cruelly mutilated with their teeth and claws cut back. They may also be chained and used as photographic props or forced to entertain the crowds with unnatural, degrading and stressful circus-style performances.

The techniques used to force the animals to perform are often cruel and abusive and the conditions in which they are kept generally fall far below acceptable welfare standards for animals in captivity. Many display severe stereotypic behaviour, such as pacing and swaying, due to neglect and poor management. Most receive no medical care and many suffer from injuries and diseases that are left untreated.

Focus areas

1 Investigations

We conduct investigations at zoos, safari parks across China to identify animal welfare concerns and report these to the management of the facilities and government authorities.

2 Improving welfare

We provide educational workshops for animal management staff at China's zoos and safari parks on meeting the health and welfare needs of captive animals.

3 Training vets

We run workshops for Chinese zoo-based vets to improve their clinical skills and introduce them to the latest animal welfare concepts and specialist veterinary techniques.

4 Public awareness

We give presentations and workshops on animal welfare and animal emotions to Chinese school children and university students to generate empathy and raise awareness of the types of practices that cause suffering at zoos and safari parks.

5 Government and policy

We engage with government authorities, public representatives and policy-makers in China to encourage them to protect animals in China's zoos and safari parks from neglect and abuse.



Our approach

Change through empathy

We work with animal ambassadors who embody the ideal that empathy for one animal can evolve into empathy for an entire species and ultimately for all species.

Negotiation

We take a non-partisan, sensitive approach in working with governments, authorities, experts and local communities. We work with, not against, people to find sustainable solutions for all parties.

Education

We inform and empower local communities for the welfare of animals and people, promoting change at the grassroots level. We promote alternatives to animal products for use in traditional medicine through our Healing without Harm campaign.

Investigation

We work with vet and bear-care teams, field officers and a network of research scientists, university students, pathologists and traditional medicine doctors to investigate the bear bile industry, the trade in cats and dogs for their meat, and cruelty to animals in captivity – and use this knowledge to fight against these practices.

Locations

Animals Asia is a registered charity with bear sanctuaries in China and Vietnam, headquarters in Hong Kong, and offices in Australia, China, Germany, the UK, US and Vietnam. We have over 300 staff worldwide, with around 250 based in China and Vietnam, almost 30 in our Hong Kong headquarters and over 20 across our other offices.

