

Professor Stephen Harris

13 October 2019

Elizabeth Wilkinson
Second Clerk
Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee
National Assembly for Wales

Dear Ms Wilkinson

The welfare of wild animals in travelling circuses

Two colleagues and I were commissioned by the National Assembly for Wales to review the scientific evidence on the welfare of wild animals in travelling circuses. We read and reviewed some 1500 scientific papers, theses and reports, as well as talking to experts and analysing the opinions of experts from across the world. Our report is the most comprehensive scientific investigation into the issue to date.

Following best practice, the process we used to find and identify the relevant literature is fully explained in the report. Prior to publication, our report was refereed by three international experts, all of whom were complimentary about the quality and extent of our investigation. None of these three experts suggested that there was bias, misrepresentation or manipulation of data.

Following publication of our report in April 2016, the University of Bristol received a complaint from the circus industry alleging bias and misrepresentation of research. The University set up an independent inquiry to investigate the complaint. On 26 January 2017 the University of Bristol's Director of Legal Services notified me that the experts appointed to undertake the inquiry had rejected the complaint outright and the University's file had been closed.

I was surprised therefore to see the following comments made by Giulia Corsini on 2 October 2019 during her visit to the National Assembly for Wales:-

 Giulia Corsini si trova qui: Cardiff con Thomas Chipperfield. ...
Chipperfield.

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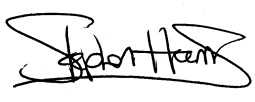
al Governo del Galles a parlare della manipolazione degli studi sugli animali fatta da Stephen Harris.



[Translation: "Giulia Corsini is here: Cardiff with Thomas Chipperfield. At the Welsh Government to talk about the manipulation of the studies on animals made by Stephen Harris"]

It is to be regretted that the circus industry continues to repeat these allegations nearly three years after an independent inquiry instigated by the University of Bristol found their complaints to be groundless.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Harris". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.