

Hereby additional background information in response to our petition;

“Let the chimpanzees stay at home in ARTIS!”

We find it incomprehensible that ARTIS (zoo of Amsterdam) can have the heart to send away its chimpanzees, who have been serving ARTIS for 50 years! > To India!

These special great apes, our closest relatives, should leave now that there is less future in them. In our opinion, Artis puts economic interests and the easiest way ahead of the well-being and health of its chimpanzees.

ARTIS will present a nice story, such as that choices have to be made due to lack of space, that this zoo in India is located in a green environment and that the chimpanzees will have a large enclosure there, much better than what ARTIS can offer its chimpanzee group itself. But space alone is not enough for the well-being of these intelligent great apes.

The reality of a move (to India/Asia) is unfortunately a bit less beautiful, as will be predicted.

- Zoos in Asia are known for a lack of animal knowledge and poor population management. The chosen zoo, the “Sardar Patal Zoological Park” (also called The Jungle Safari, but this name is very misleading) in India has had only 1 giraffe, 1 zebra and 1 wolf for 3 years.
- This garden is known in India for its high mortality rate, especially of exotic animals, due to high temperatures and ecological change (and/or poor animal care?)
- This zoo, like all Asian gardens, has no experience whatsoever in dealing with chimpanzees. This is a profession in itself. The decades of experience that ARTIS and other Dutch zoos have gained in the care of chimpanzees (and the many mistakes that were also made) cannot be transferred in a few weeks or months. Mistakes will inevitably be made.

There are also several additional risk factors;

Chimpanzees are very aware and intelligent, they can think ahead and plan.

- What if they escape? A chimpanzee escape can be very intense, how is this zoo going to deal with that?
- How will the chimpanzees react to deadly snakes?
- How will they react to the stress of the move and the unfamiliar place?

It will be a huge culture shock anyway. But will they ever get over it? One chimpanzee will handle it better than the other.

It is also known that there are several chimpanzees in the ARTIS group with fragile health, including heart problems. Medical knowledge in Asia will be quite skilled, but what such a great deal of stress causes on top of this is unfortunately impossible to oversee...

With all these risk factors, there is a good chance that a few chimpanzee individuals will not survive this move or the first 2 years after that.

In addition, the eldest female of the group, Margot, at 53 years old, is probably too fragile to handle this move because of her health. She will then have to be euthanized beforehand and prematurely.

With all due respect to ARTIS, we therefore find it incomprehensible that her chimpanzee group should move!

Like humans, chimpanzees are very relationship-oriented. They recognize each other's blood relationship. Even reaching adulthood, family members continue to support each other. Chimpanzees are highly intelligent and self-aware, and they maintain deep friendships, including with their caretakers. Being able to trust the other is extremely important in chimpanzee culture!

The real reasons that ARTIS wants to part with the chimpanzee group has to do with;

- That the chimpanzee enclosure is in need of renovation and the cost involved.
- The second reason is that the European Chimpanzee Stud Book (EEP) has stipulated that European zoos may only breed with chimpanzees of the same subspecies. And only with the West African variant.

In our opinion, this rule is outdated. Chimpanzees are threatened with extinction and the differences are nil. It is an unnecessary rule (which only applies in Europe) and which entails a lot of suffering. Namely, 13 other European zoos want to get rid of their chimpanzees because of this restrictive breeding rule.

(>> *Please sign the EEP petition too!! Link > See below*).

The chimpanzee group from ARTIS is therefore no longer allowed to have offspring due to this rule. Since then, keeping these chimpanzees has become less attractive for ARTIS.

We believe that ARTIS nevertheless has a responsibility in the care of these self-aware great apes and cannot simply dismiss these chimpanzees. These chimpanzees are fully embedded in our Western culture and used to living in ARTIS. That is their home and their safe haven.

When ARTIS moves its chimpanzees to India, they will be forced to undergo complete culture shock. No more trusted caretakers, a different language they don't understand, crowds of people with a different culture and a different outlook on great apes, will give them a lot of stress.

- Chimpanzees are self-aware, sensitive apes that are sure to feel left behind. Not understanding why they are there and not in their familiar place in ARTIS.

In our opinion, this suffering is morally unacceptable and must be avoided at all times!
That's why we ask you to sign this petition en masse!

Thank you in advance!!

On behalf of the chimpanzees from ARTIS