

# THE WAY FORWARD

“When the suffering of another creature causes you to feel pain, do not submit to the initial desire to flee from the suffering one, but on the contrary, come closer, as close as you can to him who suffers, and try to help him.” **Leo Tolstoy**



**As you can see**, things are dire for our fellow earthlings. While we can't repair the hurt we've caused, we can help prevent further harm. We must not let hopelessness set in; we must actively work to transform the traditions and norms that have led to the way things are today. This is a time for thoughtful and determined action, and for meaningful change.

## SAY NO THANK ZOO

We are seeing a rise in compassionate conservation. There are more wildlife rehabilitation centres and sanctuaries, and a decline in roadside zoos. In 2020, the Sea Life Trust opened the world's first whale sanctuary – a secluded cove in Iceland for two belugas. If you want to visit animals, make sure you are going to animal sanctuaries instead of places like zoos, wildlife parks, and aquariums. In New York City, National Geographic has an amazing *Ocean Odyssey* exhibit that's all virtual.

## TAKE ACTION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Ask your favourite local restaurants and school cafeteria to add more veggie options to their menus, or to go fully plant-based. Get involved locally by gathering petition signatures, attending protests, or volunteering at a nearby animal shelter, wildlife rehabilitation or rescue centre.

## SMELL OUT THE EVIDENCE

Animal advocacy is getting savvier and more strategic. Look to organizations that use research and evidence to help guide advocates to be more effective in their work. Faunalytics hosts a large research library on their website, and Animal Charity Evaluators publishes extensive annual charity reviews.

## ADOPT DON'T SHOP

Puppy mills are increasingly being investigated by animal welfare groups and prosecutors, with successful cases leading to the animals being confiscated and the farms being shut down. No animal should be bought. Millions of dogs, cats, and other animals are in shelters right now just waiting for you to open your heart and give them a loving home.

## SKIP THE SHOW

Nearly 50 countries have implemented nationwide bans on wild animal acts in circuses and other venues, with more following their lead. Avoid attending 'sports' that use animals—rodeos, horse and greyhound races, bullfights, dog fights, cockfights, and captive dolphin and whale shows.

## SUPPORT BETTER SCIENCE

Alternatives to animal testing are available, but without enough incentive, they aren't yet being embraced. You can help get animals out of research by buying cruelty-free products and supporting organizations like the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. If you're a student, you can ask that your school avoid inhumane practices like dissection or research on animal subjects.

## WEAR YOUR OWN SKIN

Big fashion brands are increasingly going fur-free, and national bans on fur farming are being passed, even in countries like Norway and Poland who have been major players in the global fur industry. You can help animals raised for their skins and furs by choosing vegan alternatives. If Prada is doing it, you *know* it's in vogue!

## DEMAND REFORM

The production of cheap meat is inherently entwined with labour abuses, including low wages and dangerous work. During the Covid pandemic, slaughterhouses all over the world have been identified as coronavirus infection hotspots. These problems provide more great reasons to move to a plant-based diet.

## SAVE ANIMALS EAT PLANTS

Plant-based foods are healthy, delicious, and play an important role in decreasing the consumption of animal products. Companies like Beyond Meat, Impossible Foods, Miyoko's, THIS UK, Omnipork, NotCo, Zhenmeat, JUST, and others offer plant-based meat and dairy products that taste great, without the cruelty. Not only that, but replacing animals with plants helps save the forests, our wildlife, and our precious sources of fresh water. Giving up meat will help cut down on the global greenhouse gas emissions caused by animal farming, and giving up fish will also help save dolphins, whales, sharks, seabirds, and turtles from being killed as bycatch.

## TRADE-IN YOUR TRADITIONS

International pressure through petitioning and protests has resulted in dwindling attendance at cruel events like rodeos in the US, the annual Yulin dog meat festival in China, and the mass sacrifices of animals at Gadhimai in Nepal. Embrace this change! Do we really need to kill a bull or eat a turkey to celebrate our heritage or symbolize our thankfulness?

## VOTE FOR ANIMALS

Research the animal welfare policies of your political representatives. Write, call, and visit their offices. Vote! Participate actively in your democracy on behalf of animals. Political advocacy works: In the Netherlands, the Party for the Animals has banned animals in circuses, the import of trophy hunts, and fur farming. Their next goal is to ban factory farming.

**AND THERE'S MORE!** 

# CHANGE THE LAW

Yes, you can change the law! Animal law is a growing field, and you can help be a voice for the animals. If you're interested in going to law school, check out Lewis & Clark College's renowned Animal Law program. If litigation isn't for you, support organizations fighting for legal change for animals, like the Animal Legal Defense Fund in the U.S. and Vegetarianos Hoy in Chile.

# VOTE WITH YOUR WALLET

It takes funding to move the needle on animal issues. Campaigns, materials, rescues, field work, and operations all cost money. Donate what you can to groups working hard for animals. Additionally, you can buy cruelty-free cosmetics (try LUSH!) and cleaning products. Look for the leaping bunny logo, which symbolizes a product that hasn't been tested on animals. By increasing demand for cruelty-free products, you incentivize companies to continue providing them and set an example for your friends and family.

# LEND A HAND

Support animal advocacy organizations by volunteering to contact politicians, media, or corporations on their behalf. Help stage events and build websites. Use your skills for strategic initiatives!

# PUT ON YOUR THINKING CAP

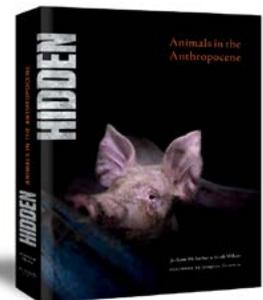
Integrate animals into educational settings, whether your own or others. You can go to school for ethology (animal behaviour) or critical animal studies. You can now even get a Master's degree in 'humane education', a growing field which teaches kids to nurture their compassion and respect for living beings.

# REMEMBER TO TAKE CARE

In order to take care of others, take care of yourself. Practice mindfulness. Seek out supportive communities. The animals need you to be healthy and strong, both mentally and physically.

# PASS IT ON

Last but not least, give this book away. You'll know who to give it to. A family member or friend who loves animals. A teacher. A journalist. A politician. A student. A CEO. A chef. Don't let these urgent stories stop with you.



**WE ANIMALS**  
M E D I A

We Animals Media documents the lives of animals in the human environment – those used for food, fashion, entertainment, work, religion, and experimentation. Our mission is to bring visibility to hidden animals worldwide through compelling photography and film. We build bridges between social movements, mentor the next generation of advocate media makers, and inspire solutions that will result in a kinder and healthier world for all. [www.weanimalsmedia.org](http://www.weanimalsmedia.org)

**COVER:** Keiko Krahnke and Shiro at BeakOn Sanctuary, USA. Photo by Jo-Anne McArthur