

Populus Survey: online fieldwork 30 October – 1 November 2015

Number of respondents: 2014

Q.1 A large proportion of Asian elephants are taken from the wild for the live elephant trade and tourism industry, for example in trekking, in festivals and at temples. These are mostly young elephants. Their capture often involves the killing of the mother and other herd members that try to protect their young and can sometimes result in the death of the young elephant. To what extent would you support or oppose the taking of elephants from the wild for use in the tourist industry?

TOTAL SUPPORT	8%
Strongly support	6%
Slightly support	3%
Neither support nor oppose	11%
Slightly oppose	11%
Strongly oppose	69%
TOTAL OPPOSE	80%

Q.2 Elephants used in tourism and temples are trained into obedience from a young age using a process called 'pajan'. This involves isolation from other elephants, deprivation of food, water and sleep, and beating with rods, chains or bullhooks, which can result in death.

Critics say that the 'pajan' is a cruel process that is used to break the spirit of young elephants and should be banned.

Supporters say that the 'pajan' is a necessary process allowing tourists to experience riding elephants and allowing elephants to be kept in temples and used for festivals and other entertainment.

To what extent would you say you believe the process of 'pajan' is justified or unjustified in training elephants for use in the tourist industry and in temples?

TOTAL JUSTIFIED	4%
Completely justified	1%
Somewhat justified	3%
Somewhat unjustified	9%
Completely unjustified	79%
TOTAL UNJUSTIFIED	88%
Don't know	8%

Q.3 Many elephants are taken from the wild for use at temples, in religious ceremonies and in festivals. Critics say that keeping elephants in temples is cruel as it subjects them to solitary confinement, malnourishment and abuse, and to repeated use in festival parades carrying excessive weights on their backs.

Supporters say that the use of elephants in temples and festivals is a traditional part of religious ceremony and contributes towards the economy. To what extent would you say you believe the use of elephants in temples is justified or unjustified?

TOTAL JUSTIFIED	5%
Completely justified	1%
Somewhat justified	4%
Somewhat unjustified	15%
Completely unjustified	72%
TOTAL UNJUSTIFIED	87%
Don't know	8%

Q.4 Elephants are also taken from the wild for use in entertainment and for tourist trekking, in which they carry up to four people on their backs in metal chairs. Critics say that using elephants in tourist trekking and shows is cruel as they are subjected to fear and pain to train them to accept riders and to perform, and they are forced to carry excessive weights, including heavy statues, metal seats and tourists, on their backs.

Supporters say that the use of elephants in tourist trekking and entertainment contributes to the economy and allows tourists to experience riding and watching elephants up close. To what extent would you say you believe the use of elephants in tourist trekking and entertainment is justified or unjustified?

TOTAL JUSTIFIED	6%
Completely justified	1%
Somewhat justified	5%
Somewhat unjustified	18%
Completely unjustified	69%
TOTAL UNJUSTIFIED	87%
Don't know	8%

Q.5 Thinking about the use of Asian elephants in the tourist industry, to what extent would you agree or disagree with the below statements?

(a) I would avoid visiting a tourist experience involving elephants if I discovered that they had been treated badly

TOTAL AGREE	85%
Agree strongly	73%
Agree slightly	12%
Neither agree nor disagree	12%
Disagree slightly	1%
Disagree strongly	2%
TOTAL DISAGREE	3%

(b) I would not book a holiday with a company that I know offers riding on elephants that have been captured and mistreated

TOTAL AGREE	79%
Agree strongly	66%
Agree slightly	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%
Disagree slightly	2%
Disagree strongly	2%
TOTAL DISAGREE	4%

(c) I am interested in participating in high welfare animal experiences, such as sanctuary visits, when on holiday

TOTAL AGREE	47%
Agree strongly	23%
Agree slightly	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	34%
Disagree slightly	9%

Disagree strongly	10%
TOTAL DISAGREE	19%

(d) I would pay more for an elephant experience that is kinder to the animals

TOTAL AGREE	56%
Agree strongly	31%
Agree slightly	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	30%
Disagree slightly	5%
Disagree strongly	9%
TOTAL DISAGREE	14%

(e) I think that UK travel companies should offer only high welfare experiences with wild animals

TOTAL AGREE	75%
Agree strongly	54%
Agree slightly	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%
Disagree slightly	2%
Disagree strongly	4%
TOTAL DISAGREE	6%

Q.6 In India, loss of habitat and migration corridors, human/elephant conflict, poaching for ivory and meat, and capture from the wild to supply tourist attractions and festivals have led to a serious decline in wild Asian elephant populations in the last few decades. Captive Asian elephants in tourism and festival use are trained using solitary confinement and beatings, and are often kept throughout their lives in poor conditions including being chained so that they have a very limited ability to move. Do you think that the Indian government is or is not doing enough to protect Asian elephants?

Is doing enough	2%
Is not doing enough	77%
Don't know	21%

Q.7 In their 2015 election manifesto, the UK Conservative Party pledged to support the Indian Government in protecting the Asian elephant, including pressing for a total ban on ivory sales. How important or unimportant do you think it is that the UK government takes action to provide this support to the Indian Government?

TOTAL IMPORTANT	81%
Very important	43%
Fairly important	39%
Not very important	14%
Not at all important	5%
TOTAL NOT IMPORTANT	19%

Note: all figures rounded to nearest whole percentage point

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