

149 Towards a model for the assessment of conservation, welfare, and governance in wildlife tourism attractions

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In the absence of appropriate standards to regulate wildlife tourism attractions (WTAs), the treatment of animals is morally justifiable on the basis of what tourists find acceptable. Under this model, there is little motivation for operators to improve standards if tourists do not leave reputationally damaging feedback. Given this current state, the objectives of this paper are twofold. First, we wish to highlight and categorise existing systemic barriers that prevent the operation of a green market for WTAs. Second, we combine knowledge of these barriers with a recently published

theoretical framework on animal justice to derive an initial, robust set of practical criteria with which non-expert tourists can externally assess - and accurately represent to other tourists - ethical standards at WTAs. These criteria allow tourists to better understand the scope and consequences of the proper and improper use of animals in tourism, which, in turn, will hopefully induce positive change along governance, conservation and animal welfare lines.