[DATE]

[NAME]

[TITLE/POSITION]

[INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION]

Dear [DATE],

It has been reported that you have [QUANTITY] sharks and rays ([INSERT SPECIES AND CONSERVATION STATUS HERE IF KNOWN]) in your possession [IF APPLICALBLE: that guests can swim with and touch].

The program claims to educate people on sharks and rays. Sharks will be put under a lot of stress if [NAME OF INSTITUTION] continues to allow visitors to touch these animals every day. While only about 30 out of the 275 species of sharks have been reported to ever attack a human, it is worth noting that sharks are predators and could be capable of inflicting wounds and injuries if provoked. Sharks must be treated with respect and care at all times. Stingrays must also be left untouched, for they use their tail spines for defense. Rays have an exceptional array of senses that allow them to perceive potential threats, even if those threats are at a considerable distance.

If this is [NAME OF INSTITUTION]’s version of “education,” then it is currently a form of miseducation, and a risky one at that.

Both sharks and stingrays have been documented to be potentially harmful in stressful situations, e.g., captivity and close human interaction. There is no recorded evidence that touching/interacting with sharks and rays would be of any benefit (emotional, educational, medical, etc.) to sharks, rays, and humans. Could we request for academic references used in crafting this program?

We urge you to release these animals back to the sea immediately after proper assessment. They may still need to be reintroduced to the wild. Sharks play an important role in the marine ecosystem. They continue to face a number of natural and manmade threats – including captivity. These sharks and rays belong to the sea, not in a small cage.

Thank you very much.

Yours truly,

[NAME]

[CONTACT INFORMATION]