

Discussion sheet: Wild animal suffering

Introductory material:

<https://sentience-politics.org/philosophy/the-relevance-of-wild-animal-suffering/>

<https://foundational-research.org/the-importance-of-wild-animal-suffering/>

["Reducing Wild Animal Suffering" by Adriano Mannino & Ruairi Donnelly](#)

[Sentience Politics' empirical and philosophical WAS research program](#)

“Why should we care about wild animal suffering?”

“The total amount of suffering per year in the natural world is beyond all decent contemplation. During the minute that it takes me to compose this sentence, thousands of animals are being eaten alive, many others are running for their lives, whimpering with fear, others are slowly being devoured from within by rasping parasites, thousands of all kinds are dying of starvation, thirst, and disease. It must be so. If there ever is a time of plenty, this very fact will automatically lead to an increase in the population until the natural state of starvation and misery is restored.” – Richard Dawkins

- Most moral systems would agree that if there are huge amounts of severe suffering happening somewhere, we should try to do something about it.
- In nature, the majority of animals endure a horrible death at a very young age, from predation, disease, starvation, and other causes.
- The number of wild animals [vastly exceeds](#) the number of animals used by humans for any purpose.
- [Study in this area](#) is highly neglected, and more research is needed to assess the viability of possible interventions.

Discussion questions:

1. What are the most [effective measures an individual can take](#) to reduce wild-animal suffering?
2. How do reductions in animal farming [impact WAS](#) in the near-term?
3. What impact could [future technologies](#) have on wild animal suffering?
4. Do environmentalists harm the cause of reducing wild animal suffering?
5. Should effective altruists [make the issue a priority](#)?

Contact:

Effective Altruism Foundation: <https://ea-stiftung.org/> or email: discussion@ea-stiftung.org

German EA Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/effektiver.altruismus/>