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## **NEW EVIDENCE REVEALS: POPULAR TOURIST ATTRACTION, THE CAYMAN TURTLE FARM, HAS KNOWN OF, BUT PUBLICLY DENIED ANIMAL SUFFERING AND DISEASE SINCE JULY 2012**

*Jan. 28, 2013:* Two new reports confirm that animal suffering is a major issue at the Cayman Turtle Farm (CTF), the **most popular tourist attraction in the Cayman Islands**. Shockingly, the reports also reveal that the CTF **has been aware of animal suffering**, overcrowding and disease for more than six months, while publically denying any issues existed.

Following a meeting between the **World Society of the Protection of Animals (WSPA)** and the CTF in July 2012, where WSPA presented its evidence of turtle cruelty, the CTF initiated an *“immediate assessment”* of its facility.

The findings, drawn up by CTF’s own turtle expert, Professor Brendan Godley (which the Farm has gone to great lengths to hide) identified problems similar to those published in WSPA’s investigation. Despite this, the CTF has continually sought to undermine WSPA’s claims referring to them as *“ungrounded,” “unfounded, erroneous and sensationalized.”*

The Farm’s own findings confirmed that a **significant number of turtles have injuries** consistent with **severe overcrowding** and that **disease is a “serious problem”**. The assessment also found that the Farm’s much promoted conservation facility does not have any veterinary care and observed **evidence “consistent with...cannibalism.”**

Results from a second assessment arranged by the Farm in December 2012, following continued pressure from WSPA, were **finally made public on Friday**. They state that there is *“clearly room for improvement in standards of care [at the Farm]”*. The assessment also noted *“severe injuries”* among *“a notable proportion of animals”* including *“skin lesions”* and *“high mortality levels”* in young turtles.

WSPA wildlife expert Dr. Neil D’Cruze said:

“The assessments of the Farm in July, and then again in December closely matches our own investigation, proving that the Farm knew our findings were true from the outset. Yet, instead of taking us up on our offer to work with them to find a solution, they accused us of sensationalism. While both reports vindicate some of our concerns, we fear that their recommendations will, sadly, do little to improve turtle welfare in the long term.

The CTF is a popular tourist destination for many cruise line passengers and has been a focus for the travel industry after WSPA produced **scientific evidence showing E. Coli, Salmonella and a host of other harmful pathogens** in water from the turtle touch tanks. The Farm’s latest report states there are *‘no health concerns’* but fails to provide any data to show if the water was even tested in a laboratory.

Representatives from WSPA will be meeting with the Farm on Tuesday 29 January and they remain hopeful that the Farm will reconsider working in collaboration to address the many turtle welfare issues there.

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For more detail on the report findings and WSPA’s response please contact:  
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