

Argentine judge to decide Sandra the orangutan's fate

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Sandra the orangutan was born at the Zoo Rostock in Germany in 1986 and was sent to Argentina in 1994

An Argentine judge began hearing expert testimony this week to decide what to do with an orangutan named Sandra after another court ruled she was entitled to certain human rights, including the right to be freed from

the Buenos Aires Zoo.

In a world first, a court in the Argentine capital ruled in December that Sandra, a 29-year-old female, was entitled to some of the same basic rights as humans, after lawyers filed a writ of habeas corpus on her behalf, alleging unlawful imprisonment.

The latest hearings are to decide whether Sandra, who has spent her life in zoos, can reasonably be released into the wild or the semi-freedom of an animal sanctuary.

Sandra was not present in [court](#), where she was represented by her lawyer Andres Gil Dominguez.

Sandra—who was born at the Zoo Rostock in Germany in 1986 and was sent to Argentina in 1994—is known for her shyness, often hiding from sight in her enclosure.

Animal activists say that is a sign of depression, but some experts say it is normal behavior for orangutans.

Sandra has long reddish hair, weighs about 50 kilograms (110 pounds) and is almost 1.5 meters (five feet) tall.

Wild orangutans have a life expectancy of about 30 to 40 years. Captives can live longer.

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