

Call for more animal welfare controls in Chinese research

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Researchers from The Australian National University (ANU) have urged China to have more stringent laws for medical research on primates, as China has become a hub for animal testing due to a lack of animal welfare controls.

Dr Alison Behie of the ANU School of Archaeology and Anthropology

said researchers from Europe were being drawn to China, where more than 40,000 primates are housed for use in research every year, in order to avoid European red tape.

Professor Colin Groves adds "Countries in the European Union have done a lot of consultation and reached an understanding acknowledging animal welfare on one side, and legitimate research on the other," .

"Just as they reached a stable state, China came in and without any hindrance to research at all says 'come here and we'll let you do what you want'.

"So the European researchers who had agreed to the EU rules left for China."

In the wake of public outrage after the shooting of a gorilla at a Cincinnati zoo, Dr Behie said there needs to be more awareness that primate populations in China are being lost at an alarming rate.

"There's all this outrage about this one animal being killed, but the problem is what's happening in the wild," Dr Behie said.

"There's 19 species of [primates](#) in China and of those, 18 are in serious decline."

Dr Behie and Professor Groves co-authored a letter published in *Nature*, in response to an article published citing China as a world leader in primate biomedical research.

Provided by Australian National University

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