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Russian Activists Fume Over Live-Turtle Hookah Pipes

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The reptiles are allegedly unable to inhale the hookah smoke from within their aquariums. **Pixabay / Screenshot Youtube**

Mexico's mezcal worm, meet Russia's hookah turtle.

An upscale bar in the western city of Bryansk has sparked online outrage for offering its visitors hookahs with live turtles, snakes and goldfish swimming inside the pipes' glass bases.

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Публикация от Lis_help_animals (@lis_help__animals) 20 Янв 2020 в 1:49 PST

An animal-rights social media account posted videos of the reptiles in a club setting, expressing outrage over the “cheap showoffs” who run the bar and took the animals out of their comfort zone.

In a follow-up post, the activists noted that the pipe’s glass base is separate from the aquarium where the fish and turtles swim, meaning the animals can’t inhale the smoke from the hookah.

“But that doesn’t decrease these living creatures' mortality in any way,” they wrote Monday. “Small turtles especially need to rest on land, they can’t always be in water.”

The bar’s manager said the animals were well taken care of and not in danger, and apologized

for offending the activists.

“We’re ready to accept any inspection to prove that we love all the animals in the world,” he said in an Instagram Stories video posted by the activists.

Bryansk’s environmental prosecutors plan to inspect the bar, the state-run RIA Novosti reported Monday. The city’s consumer protection watchdog also vowed to inspect the facility, the animal-rights Instagram account said.

“Being simple isn’t for us,” reads one of the bar’s Facebook posts advertising a wide range of hookahs.

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