

# WAZA Recommendations on Cooperation between Associations

## Introduction

Cooperation at all levels is crucial to the cohesion of the WAZA Network and all that it stands for. The purpose of the present document is to enhance such cooperation by promoting the establishment and improvement of association partnerships and networks. In doing so it will assist regional and national associations in their efforts to create a conservation conscience appropriate to their culture and to bring the activities of all their members into a common ethical and technical framework.

WAZA and association members will develop a culture of mutual respect, trust and understanding and will support and promote one another.

## Conservation

Association members should ensure that their constituencies adhere to the 'WAZA Guidelines for Member *in situ* Conservation Involvement'. It should be noted that WAZA and associations members are credible conservation organisations only if the institution members themselves strive to become centres of conservation.

## Animal Management

Regional and national associations are strongly encouraged to pursue the development of cooperative animal management initiatives. To this effect, WAZA will develop Conservation Breeding Guidelines.

Where coordinated conservation breeding programmes based on sound science and management exist, WAZA provides the forum for dialogue and cooperation in the form of the Committee for Inter-Regional Conservation Coordination (CIRCC). In instances where regional programmes link together to address global conservation strategies, WAZA defines some required parameters in the 'Procedures and Responsibilities for Inter-Regional *ex situ*-Management Programmes' (San José 2003).

All conservation breeding programmes should be evaluated in terms of their objectives, status and viability. An evaluation system will be provided through WAZA.

## Animal Welfare

Regional and national associations are expected to adopt the 'WAZA Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare' as an absolute minimum standard for animal welfare issues in their region.

Associations are encouraged to develop and implement accreditation systems or other peer-reviewed means for ensuring a high standard of animal keeping, in particular for those species managed by cooperative *ex situ* breeding programmes. Such systems, under most circumstances, should be acknowledged by other association members as adequate animal welfare competency.

## Education and Training

WAZA will cooperate with the International Zoo Educators Association (IZE) with a view of assisting upon request,

association members in the formulation of training and education policies and protocols.

Association members are encouraged to develop education and training resources and capacity that can be shared internationally. They may avail themselves of the opportunities to enhance training and education potential as represented by WAZA's CIRCC Training Grant Programme.

## Marketing and Public Relations

WAZA and association members need to have certain information so that they can maintain a profile of their respective constituencies and of the WAZA Network as a whole. This will assist in the provision of definitive marketing and public relations information, which will lead to a better service to the membership. Association members should, therefore, make every effort to collect and collate institutional membership information and to share it with WAZA and with one another.

Association members should promote WAZA, all other association members and the affiliates by linking their respective websites.

Association members should take a collaborative approach to marketing campaigns which target specific taxa or habitats in other regions. WAZA will provide a mediated forum at which such collaborative action could be discussed.

## Advocacy

Regional and national issues will, for the most part be best resolved by the appropriate association member. WAZA and other associations may be solicited in an advocacy role as required. At the global level WAZA will synchronize such actions as may be required by the constituency as comprised by the WAZA Network.

Further to the requirements of this advocacy role, association members should collect relevant legislation and make it available to WAZA (preferably in electronic form), which will lead to a better service to the WAZA and member associations' constituencies.

## Networking

At each annual conference, WAZA shall hold a meeting of association members with a meaningful agenda to further enhance collaboration at national and regional levels.

Recognizing the value of the inherent goodwill in attending one another's annual conferences, association members are encouraged to make every effort to solicit colleague association member attendance. This may imply financial assistance. As a general rule, participants from other associations, unless being sponsored, will be charged the conference fee relevant to the host association's membership.

When travelling to another region, executive personnel of WAZA and association members are encouraged to liaise with the local association member executive office.

Members of the WAZA Network are encouraged to use the relevant association members' executive offices for due diligence and *bona fide* checking of institutions.

### Partnership Agreements

Association members should consider entering into formalized partnership agreements with one another and should encourage their institution members to do the same with institutions from other regions. WAZA in collaboration with the association members will develop a template for partnerships between institutions..

In concluding partnership agreements association members should always prioritize capacity building initiatives and, in particular, should take consideration of the following:

- Access to information

- Transfer of skills and knowledge
- Reciprocal training of zoo and aquarium staff
- Staff exchange
- Cooperative *ex situ* management programmes
- Animal transfers between their constituencies
- Cooperative *in situ* conservation projects and programmes
- Collaborative marketing and fundraising efforts
- Joint meetings
- Reciprocal membership benefits
- Sponsorship

The sustainability and effectiveness of such partnership agreements is essential to their success. Therefore, a process for a regular evaluation of the relationship is recommended.

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## Ethical Guidelines for the Conduct of Research on Animals by Zoos and Aquariums

### Background

Research in zoos encompasses a wide range of disciplines including: Behaviour, nutrition, ecology, reproductive biology, genetics, veterinary medicine.

Different forms of research carried out in the zoo/aquarium or by associated workers in the field, can be broadly categorised as **invasive** or **non-invasive**. Non-invasive examples include behavioural observations and the use of waste products for hormonal monitoring. Invasive research includes all that alters an animals' direct environment, either in captivity or the wild, or which requires the handling of the study animal(s).

Zoo biology has often been viewed as the 'poor cousin' of conservation biology, however, its potential to elucidate complex biological questions is now being recognised, as demonstrated by the increase of zoo and aquarium related studies in peer-reviewed journals and increasing requests for partnerships by universities. Zoos and aquariums should not lose out on this opportunity to participate in high quality research, published in peer-reviewed journals. By establishing clear standards for the ethical use of animals in research zoos and aquariums can provide the foundations for these aims.

### Guidelines

#### Introduction

WAZA believes that conservation cannot take place in ignorance. If wild animals and places are to be preserved for future generations then systematic knowledge of individuals, groups and ecosystems is essential to those aims. This document offers guidelines by which individual zoos and aquariums can develop an ethical approach that best reflects the aims of WAZA and individual institutions. These guidelines provide a code of practice for the use of

animals in research in captivity and in the wild by zoos and aquariums and/or associated institutions.

#### Basic Principle

Zoos and aquariums must balance the welfare of Individuals against the conservation of species or ecosystems when assessing potential projects. The primary aim of the modern zoo and aquarium is one of conservation, and whilst this may be perceived as a 'greater good' and acknowledged as such, it does not imply that ethical considerations can be ignored.

#### Assessment of the Ethics of Research

To assess the ethics of research, zoos and aquariums may find it helpful to develop ethical review committees to evaluate proposed research, either undertaken in the organisation, by staff in the field or by staff of other associated institutions. The ethical review process must be open and transparent to all concerned. Consequently it is in the best interests of individual organisations that as wide a variety of disciplines as possible should be represented on this committee. There may also be times when the decision-making process must be open to public scrutiny. Local and regional associations may be able to provide documents to aid in this process such as that produced by the UK Zoos' Forum.

#### Legality

A pre-requisite of any proposed research is that it must comply with and adhere to all applicable legislation regarding animal welfare, research and the environment, including official codes of practice and international conventions.

