

# EAZA Code of Ethics

## (Preamble, obligations and behaviour)



Approved by EAZA Council

18 September 2015

(updated 21 April 2016 to include newly approved documents in the list at the end)

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### **Preamble**

Zoos and aquariums are important contributors to biodiversity conservation, conservation research, environmental education, and as cultural or social institutions in their local communities. In order to fulfil their environmental and social responsibilities EAZA members must uphold ethical values congruent with the above mission areas, and best practice in all areas must be predicated on these accepted ethical values. As such, acceptance of the World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy is implicit in membership of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA).

The following Code of Ethics is the cornerstone of EAZA and underpins all member institutions' involvement in EAZA. The Code of Ethics is a holistic document which covers animal management and transactions, education, environmental sustainability, biodiversity conservation, research, and social responsibility to staff, visitors, colleagues in other zoos and aquariums and the larger community. The Code of Ethics sets out the values which must be maintained and the Code of Behaviour, embedded in this document, sets out the manner in which these values must be practiced.

### **All members of EAZA must:**

- Act in accordance with the EAZA Standards, Procedures, Statements, Guideline and Best Practice Documents (available from the EAZA website [www.eaza.net](http://www.eaza.net)),
- Assist in achieving the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of the planet's resources. Any actions taken in relation to an individual animal must be undertaken with this higher ideal of biodiversity conservation in mind,
- Implement the current World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy and the World Zoo and Aquarium Animal Welfare Strategy to the best of their abilities,
- Promote the interests of wildlife conservation, biodiversity and animal welfare to colleagues and to their society as a whole,
- Assist the wider conservation community including wildlife agencies, conservation organisations, governments and research institutions in maintaining global biodiversity,
- Ensure that any activities they carry out do not threaten in any way the short or long-term survival of threatened species in the wild,
- Cooperate with governments and other appropriate bodies to improve standards of animal welfare,
- Encourage research into, and dissemination of, achievements in all aspects of zoo and wild animal research. Research undertaken must adhere to all relevant legal frameworks and this Code of Ethics,

- Disseminate professional information and advice to other members and to not undertake actions to impede the development and reputation of other members,
- Develop and implement visitor education programmes based on accepted scientific fact. Education provided must not mislead the public about accepted scientific understanding and where myth or belief systems are described must be clearly labelled as such and not promoted as science,
- Demonstrate the EEP spirit and act for the benefit of conservation in EEPs and through institutional and regional collection planning,
- Strive for the highest standards of husbandry ethics and ensure best practice in animal care,
- Wherever possible achieve environmental sustainability in all work undertaken and strive to improve environmental performance in all practices,
- Ensure an ethical approach when undertaking any marketing and PR work and to ensure that animals are not put at risk of physical or mental injury, and are used in an appropriate manner so that a positive and respectful image of the animal(s) is projected, acknowledging that the way animals and zoos are portrayed by the media can impact on public perceptions,
- Treat their visitors, volunteers and staff members in such a way as to ensure they are not discriminated against and that appropriate health and safety for all visitors, volunteers and staff is in place,
- Ensure that all investments that the institution carries out are ethical and do not act against the mission of EAZA,
- At all times members act in accordance with all local, national and international law and strive for the highest standards of operation in all areas,
- Behave in such a manner as to not bring the reputation of EAZA into disrepute in any way.

#### **Code of Behaviour – how to behave as an EAZA member**

- Practice honest and transparent communication to visitors, volunteers, staff and professional colleagues at all times,
- Ensure that the way you communicate with your visitors reflects the way you think inside the institution,
- Endeavour to provide visitors with the highest qualities of amenities and experiences, recognising that the total experience of visitors influences their view of the institution and other members,
- As a colleague you should help your EAZA community, particularly with respect to animal movements. Respect the needs of the EEPs and EAZA Community,
- Recognising that the furtherance of wildlife conservation is an important objective of EAZA you must,; Promote and support biodiversity conservation, allocate resources to conservation efforts, engage visitors in conservation issues and projects, regularly evaluate and document conservation efforts and make that information available,
- Ensure that publicity resulting from cooperative efforts includes recognition of the contributions of other parties, acknowledging the benefits of collaborative efforts,
- Participate as much as possible in EAZA Conservation Campaigns, to promote zoos as conservation-oriented institutions,

- Promote EAZA and its programmes, and advertise the benefits of membership,
- You must make yourself and your institutions aware of the Code of Ethics and all Standards, Procedures, Statements, Guideline and Best Practice documents pertaining to the Code of Ethics and EAZA as a whole,
- The EAZA Code of Ethics must be reflected in the organisation and management of your institution,
- Support periodic evaluation of this Code of Ethics and the documents it refers to,

The following key documents pertain to this Code of Ethics and all EAZA members must be aware of the contents of these documents. All the following documents are subject to review where applicable. These documents are mandatory except where otherwise clearly indicated within them. The list is not exhaustive and all the latest Standards, Procedures, Statements, Guideline and Best Practice Documents are available from the EAZA website [www.eaza.net](http://www.eaza.net).

### **EAZA Standards, Procedures, Statements, and Guideline Documents**

- Constitution of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (2006)
- EAZA Standards for the Accommodation and Care of Animals in Zoos and Aquaria (2014)
- EAZA Population Management Manual
- EAZA Conservation Standards (2016)
- EAZA Conservation Education Standards (2016)
- EAZA Research Standards (2003)
- EAZA Guidelines on the definition of a direct contribution to conservation (2015)
- EAZA Guidelines on the use of animals in public demonstrations (2014)
- EAZA Culling Statement (2015)
- EAZA Statement on Intentional Breeding for the Expression of Rare Recessive Alleles (May 2013)
- Sanctions in the case of a violation of the Code of Ethics or EEP procedures (2016)
- IUCN/SSC Guidelines for Reintroductions and Other Conservation Translocations (2013)
- IUCN/SSC Guidelines on the Use of Ex situ Management for Species Conservation (2014)
- Sanctions in the case of a violation of the EAZA Code of Practice, Code of Ethics, or EEP procedures (2010)