

**EAZA Code of Ethics 2009  
(Preamble, obligations and behaviour)**



**Agreed by Council 18<sup>th</sup> September 2009\***

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\*Council did not reach agreement on one further point not contained in this preamble concerning use of suppliers to zoos. This will be discussed at the next Council meeting in Beauval, May 2010, for inclusion in this document.

**Preamble**

Zoos and aquariums are important contributors to biodiversity conservation, conservation research, environmental education and as cultural or social institutions in their local communities. EAZA members, in order to fulfil their environmental and social responsibilities, 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 in the European Association of Zoos and Aquariums (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 are obligated to:**

- Assist in achieving the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of the planets resources. Any actions taken in relation to an individual animal must be undertaken with this higher ideal of biodiversity conservation in mind. All EAZA members will implement the World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy (2005) to the best of their abilities,
- Promote the interest 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,
- Be aware of all policies and guidelines of EAZA and work towards implementing all professional guidelines established by EAZA,
- Demonstrate the EEP spirit and act for the benefit of conservation in EEPs and through institutional and regional collection planning,
- Demonstrate 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 used in an appropriate manner, and are not put at risk of physical or mental injury,
- 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,
- As a colleague you should help your EAZA community, particularly with respect to animal movements. Respect the needs of the EEPs and EAZA Community,
- You must make yourself and your institutions aware of the Code of Ethics and all policies/statements 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,
- You must not bring the association into disrepute with your actions or damage the reputation of EAZA in any way.

The following 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;

Constitution of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (2006)

EAZA Standards for the Accommodation and Care of Animals in Zoos and Aquaria (2008)

EAZA Code of Practice (2004)

EAZA Education Standards (2008)

EAZA Research Standards (2003)

In addition a series of supporting documents pertaining to this revised Code of Ethics are in preparation and will be made available as soon as possible.

**September 2009**