

Ethical guidelines of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) and their practical implications

Dr. Jörg Junhold

Director of Leipzig Zoo & WAZA council member



World Association
of Zoos and Aquariums
(WAZA)

Animal ethics in zoos

- Ethics = the science of morals
- Morals and thus ethical standards change continuously
- Changing attitudes towards keeping animals in human care
- Previously: welfare received little consideration
- Recently: development of legislation and ethical guidelines

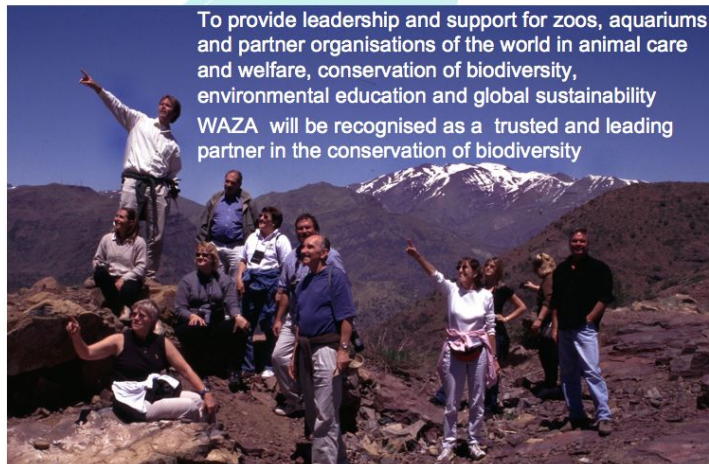


World Association
of Zoos and Aquariums

What is WAZA ?



Mission and Vision of WAZA



WAZA policies on ethics and animal welfare

- Early 1990s: Beginning of change process of the organization (WCS, Institutional membership)
- 1995: committee to devise official ethical guidelines
- 1999: Code of Ethics accepted
- 2003: Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare adopted (www.waza.org/ethics)



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Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare Basic principles

1. Conservation and survival of species without compromising individual welfare
2. Promote interests of wildlife conservation and animal welfare
3. Cooperate with the wider conservation community to assist in wildlife conservation
4. Cooperate to improve standards of and to ensure animal welfare
5. Encourage research and dissemination of results
6. Deal fairly with members in the dissemination of profess. information
7. Promote public education programs and cultural recreation
8. Work progressively towards achieving all WAZA guidelines

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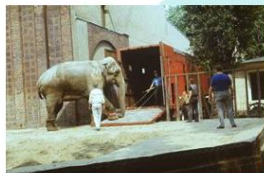
Aim of code

- Development of ethical tradition and standard of conduct
- Members deal to the highest standard of ethical conduct
- Members act in accordance with all laws at all times
- Members exercise highest standards of animal welfare
- Training staff to the highest level possible



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Practical implications of code



1. Acquisition of animals
(sourcing captive-bred or wild-caught, using of animal dealers...)

2. Keeping of animals in captivity
(behavioural needs, nutrition, health care, management practices...)

3. Disposal of animals
(transfer, release to the wild, surplus animals...)



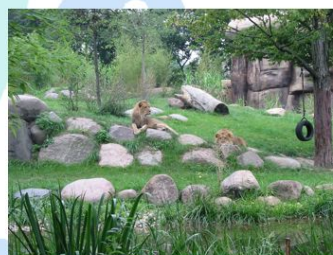
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Keeping conditions of lions Example Leipzig Zoo

1901 - 2000



From 2001



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WAZA ethical guidelines oppose:

- Illegal and unsustainable taking of animals and other natural resources from the wild, e.g. for bush meat, corals, fur or skin, traditional medicine, timber production.
- Illegal trade in wild animals and wild animal products.
- Cruel and non-selective methods of taking animals from the wild.
- Collecting for, or stocking of animal exhibits, in particular aquariums, with the expectation of high mortality.
- The use, or supply of animals for “canned hunting”, i.e. shooting animals in confined spaces, or when semi tranquilised or restrained.
- Keeping and transporting of animals under inadequate conditions, e.g., the keeping of bears in confinement for extraction of bile, dancing bears, roadside zoos or circuses / entertainment.

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Acceptance of ethical guidelines by WAZA members

- Members sign Memorandum of Agreement to comply with code
- They acknowledge that:
 - ... the standards required of the membership to comply with this Code will be monitored by the WAZA Council.
 - ... failure to comply with the WAZA Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare will result in the offending member institution being called upon to answer for its failure before WAZA Council.
 - ... any decision taken by WAZA Council will be final.

The image shows a document titled "WAZA CODE OF ETHICS AND ANIMAL WELFARE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT". It includes a preamble, a list of four points, and a signature section. The points are:

- I agree to abide by the Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare established by the members of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) and to accept the monitoring of my institution's compliance with the Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare by the WAZA Council.
- I acknowledge that failure to comply with the WAZA Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare will result in the offending member institution being called upon to answer for its failure before the WAZA Council.
- I acknowledge that any decision taken by the WAZA Council will be final.
- I understand that the WAZA Council will be final.

 The signature section includes fields for Name, Title, Institution, and Date.

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WAZA By-Laws Article VI, Section 4. Ethics and Welfare Committee

- *“The Ethics and Welfare Committee is responsible for monitoring the Organization’s members and their compliance with the Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare in accordance with Article II and Article III, Section 9 of these Bylaws. It also has the responsibility of investigating alleged member violations of this Code and the subsequent reporting of its confidential findings to Council.”*
- Committee deals with sub-standard zoos worldwide
- Committee proposes potential sanctions against offenders
- Development of a formal WAZA complaint procedure (2007)



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Main topics/complaints of committee work during last years

- Termination of membership of Giza Zoo, Egypt (2004)



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Reproductive management



- Particularly controversial topic
- Example: hand-raising polar bears in Germany
- 2003: consensus document on reproductive management
- Guiding principles for responsible management of zoo populations

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Consensus document Rigi Symposium 2003



- Providing opportunity for reproduction
- Not all individuals reproduce and not all offspring survive
- Zoos need to regulate their stock
- Potentially necessary to euthanise individuals
- Supportive and restrictive breeding measures

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Practical implications

- Public outcry after decision not to hand-raise but euthanise sloth bear
- Accepted standards of management different for farm and zoo animals
- Animal welfare and animal rights campaigns
- Important for continued existence of zoos



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Ethical considerations outside zoos

- Condemns ill-treatment of and cruelty to any animals
- Sustainable harvesting of wild animals and other natural resources
- International trade in compliance with CITES
- Practical implications



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World conservation strategy



- Acceptance of strategy implicit in involvement
- Emphasises importance given to zoos for conservation
- Link *ex situ* conservation efforts to *in situ* activities
- Ethical obligation to promote wildlife conservation
- New and holistic conservation ethic



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Chapter 9 – Ethics and welfare

Vision

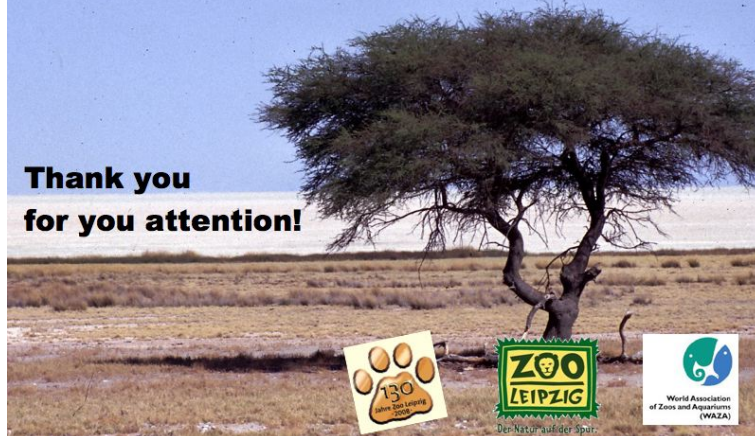
All zoos and aquariums will follow ethical principles and maintain the highest standards of animal welfare in order to establish and sustain viable populations of healthy animals for conservation purposes and to convey credible conservation messages to the public.



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**Thank you
for you attention!**



Pongoland

Eröffnung
04/2001





KIWARA-Savanne
Eröffnung 02.04.2004



Foto: P. Rasbach