



Code of Ethics of the Latin American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums

CODE OF ETHICS

ALPZA

The Latin American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums – ALPZA - adopts the general guidelines of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums – WAZA - in terms of Conservation and Animal Welfare, constituting these as the main axes of the development of activities for members (both zoological institutions, professionals and others).

This is a living document, which seeks the support and adherence of all our institutions to bring about its unification and consolidation, promoting inter-institutional debate. The current version is an update of the ALPZA Code of Ethics published in 2011 and prepared by Leonardo Arias and Diana Sarmiento, with comments from Carmen Linares and Adrián Sestelo (approved by the Assembly of Members in the Assembly of Santo Domingo 2011). For the 2018 edition, the modifications were made by members of the ALPZA Accreditation and Ethics Committee (Carmen Linares, Leonardo Arias), the ALPZA Animal Welfare Committee (Eduardo Francisco, Andrea Caiozzi, Martín Zordan) and Alexandra Guerra.

The ALPZA Code of Ethics 2018 was approved with a majority of votes during the ALPZA Members Assembly held in San Clemente de Tuyú on April 27, 2018.

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PREAMBLE

The Conservation and Animal Welfare strategies of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums

In its 2015 version, WAZA establishes that all zoos and aquariums must aspire to the highest standards of animal welfare as a fundamental basis to become leading institutions that contribute to the conservation of global biodiversity. When zoos and aquariums accept the responsibility that comes with the maintenance and care of animals, they must provide care and management of the highest quality, within and across member institutions, and provide moral and ethical leadership, among others.^{1,2}

The mission behind Bioethics is to study ethical problems and at the very least develop procedures that provide answers, if not actual answers.³ From this perspective, the management of zoological institutions must involve a bioethical vision to achieve the central objective of conservation, which is the main goal of all zoos and aquariums. Bioethics strives to perfect rules, principles, procedures and institutions that help explain and resolve problems that are routinely formulated.⁴ According to this position, a Code of Ethics is defined with a view to guiding the actions of the members belonging to the organization, in this case the members of the Latin American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (ALPZA).

A Code of Ethics is a system of general values, manifested in a set of standards, rules and guidelines that the interested party wishes to apply to its members, regulating their ethical behavior. The ALPZA Code of Ethics has been structured in order to include all aspects related to the professional behavior of its members; In this way, the Association directs actions to maintain a high standard in the conduct of the professionals and collaborators of its institutions through the commitment of its members to follow ethical principles, consistent with the mission and vision of the Association and with the ethical principle of Animal Welfare.

¹ Mellor, D. J., Hunt, S. & Gusset, M. (eds) (2015) Caring for wildlife: The Global Strategy of Zoos and Aquariums for Animal Welfare. Gland: WAZA Executive Office: 94 pp.

² Barongi, R., Fiskén, F.A., Parker, M. & Gusset, M. (eds) 2015. Committing to conservation: The global strategy of zoos and aquariums for conservation. Gland: WAZA Executive Office, 69pp.

OBLIGATIONS OF ALPZA MEMBERS

All ALPZA members are required to:

1. Work in accordance with the corresponding international and national laws.
2. Maintain the highest standards of animal welfare, involving not only wild species, but also domestic and production animals that are involved in the general management of populations.
3. Fulfill the basic objective of conservation, proposed by ALPZA and WAZA, promoting interest in it among the members of the Association and visitors in general.
4. To promote the conservation and survival of all species. Any action should be considered under the objective of conserving species in the long term. This includes, as far as possible, supporting national or international organizations that ensure the conservation of global biodiversity.
5. Promote the publication and dissemination of professional information and share it with other members.
6. Promote appropriate and coherent programs for the education of the different types of visitors on which the institution has influence.
7. Follow strict management and welfare rules for the use of animals in invasive research, in which the respect for their life and their physical and psychological integrity prevail.
8. Apply the minimum standards defined by the National and/or local Associations*, and environmental regulatory entities in matters of:
 - Education
 - Investigation
 - Sleeping areas, exhibits and management areas
 - Nutrition and food
 - Animal marking
 - Reproductive management
 - Euthanasia
 - Veterinary and public health aspects
 - Animal transport and mobilization
 - Visitor management
 - Staff
 - Security
 - Behavioral management: Animal enrichment and training
 - Animals participating in activities that involve interaction or closeness with visitors (presentations, demonstrations)
 - Animal breeding for consumption (Bioterios)

* In the case of not having a national and/or local association, please request support from ALPZA.

* ALPZA members agree to comply with the stipulations of the Association's Code of Ethics and recognize that any failure that goes against the agreements defined in this document jeopardizes their permanence within ALPZA, or their accreditation process.

SPECIAL ETHICAL ASPECTS

Within the management of zoological institutions, it is common to encounter dilemmas of a bioethical type, in which the Association must present a definite position to guide good analytical judgement of such cases and specify a course of action consistent with the objectives and principles defined.

ALPZA accepts the model of the five domains for understanding animal welfare as a fundamental basis for management in our institutions:

The animal welfare model based on the five domains focuses on providing positive states of welfare to animals under human care, contrary to traditional models (for example, the five freedoms) that sought to mitigate negative welfare states. The model incorporates the four physical/functional domains of nutrition, environment, health and behavior and a fifth mental domain to direct attention on all identified negative conditions and their cumulative impact on well-being. Sensory stimuli from physical domains feed the mental domain through experiences, and the result represents the general status of animal welfare.²

ACQUISITION OF ANIMALS

- a. Any acquisition or shipment of animals must be governed by national norms and international conventions in force, taking care not to support the illegal trade in wild species.³
- b. Any import or export of native or exotic plants or animals to each country must comply
- c. ALPZA Zoos and Aquariums cannot, under any circumstances, buy or negotiate animals that are trafficked or illegally extracted from their environment and that do not come from sources authorized by the governments of each country.
- d. No member must participate in the creation or deliberate provision of false or erroneous information in order to facilitate transportation or mobilization, or the corresponding permits, of specimens from/to the collection.
- e. Any extraction of wild animals must be previously authorized by regulatory entities, comply with the corresponding permits, and must not put wild populations at risk. It must be carried out with widely justified reasons for conservation (eg captive breeding programs for conservation).

ANIMAL TRANSFER

- f. Members should seek the means and information to ensure beforehand that the institutions that receive animals have the appropriate facilities for their maintenance, and personnel capable of implementing and maintaining the necessary standards of care and welfare.
- g. Any details of health, nutrition and diet, reproductive, genetic and behavioral status that affect the management of an animal that is to be transferred (or that of other animals in the group of the institution that receives it) should be declared at the beginning of the negotiations.

² Mellor, D.J. 2014. Animal Welfare Position Statement. At https://www.zooaquarium.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/ZAA_AnimalWelfare_PS.pdf

³ CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. <http://www.cites.org>

with the requirements of both countries, and must be verified prior to the start of shipment.

- h. All animal transfers must be governed by national and international standards applied to the particular species. When feasible, or when management of a species requires it, animals must be accompanied by qualified personnel and by timely information that facilitates the integration of the animal into their new home.
- i. ALPZA members agree not to transfer specimens to destinations in which it is suspected or known that animals will be victims of mishandling, poor conditions, or are subjected to procedures, trials or investigations that cause suffering.
- j. ALPZA members should not support or generate links with circuses or any other presentation that uses wild animals in their shows for purely recreational purposes, or without taking into account the welfare of their specimens.

MANAGEMENT UNDER HUMAN CARE

- k. ALPZA members agree to maintain the highest standards of animal welfare by promoting evaluation using the five-domain model.
- l. ALPZA members agree to ensure and make maximum efforts to maintain the biological and genetic integrity of the specimens and taxa in their collections.
- m. ALPZA members will have trained personnel, and training programs as required, to ensure the training and correct performance of the people who are in charge of handling the animals that are under human care.
- n. ALPZA members agree not to inflict unnecessary pain or stress that affects animal welfare.
- o. ALPZA members agree to participate in cooperative species management programs that are led and coordinated by ALPZA. They agree to send truthful and updated information about their individuals to support the program. They will also support and/or participate in conservation programs of independent entities that are recognized locally and regionally.
- p. ALPZA members agree to have adequate records and information on each of their specimens. In case of being transferred, this information will be sent together with the animals to the destination institution.

CONTRACEPTION

- q. Contraception should be used when there is a need for population management.
- r. The possible side effects of surgical or chemical contraception, as well as the negative impact on behavior, should be considered before making the final decision.
- s. Definitive contraception of specimens of species that are listed (EN, VU, CR) must be carefully studied and justified so as not to jeopardize the viability of the species that is under human care.

- t. Definitive contraception of specimens of species within ALPZA Regional Cooperative Management Programs must be previously consulted with the species coordinator and the Conservation Committee.

EUTHANASIA

- u. If, after considering alternative solutions, euthanasia of an animal is considered necessary, the technique used must ensure rapid, effective and painless death. The euthanasia guide proposed by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) should be taken into account.⁴
- v. Euthanasia must be controlled and done in accordance with local entities and the laws of the country. It must be recommended by a technical committee internal to the institution, which must support its decisions in minutes that guarantee the clarity of the procedure used.
- w. A post-mortem examination should be performed and, if necessary, preserve biological material for research and genetic conservation.
- x. Specific cases of application of euthanasia may be reviewed by the ALPZA Accreditation and Ethics Committee.

MUTILATION

- y. The mutilation of any animal for cosmetic procedures, or to change the physical appearance of it, is not acceptable. Nor is the practice of onychectomy (claw amputation) or cutting and/or filing of teeth to reduce their defensive capacity.
- z. Pinioning is not recommended, except in exceptional cases, with the prior approval of the technical committee of each institution, and assuming the welfare of the animal is guaranteed during its practice. It is suggested to take into account the following recommendations:
 - i. Do not increase the number of birds amputated, unless there are exceptions approved by the technical committee of each institution.
 - ii. Reconditioning enclosures to allow the display of birds without amputating.
 - iii. If the institution's norms allow it, perform the cutting of feathers as a reversible measure of flight restriction. Training programs for the species can be implemented and thus facilitate the cutting of feathers as a temporary flight restriction measure.
 - iv. That construction of new enclosures considers the need for bird flight.
 - v. Respect the laws of each country.
- aa. The marking of animals for identification should always be carried out in a way that minimizes suffering, and under professional supervision. For marking purposes, mutilation that affects the survival or physical and/or behavioral functions of individuals should not be practiced. If so, the procedure to be performed must guarantee analgesia and good management techniques.

⁴ AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of animals: 2013 Edition. Available: <https://www.avma.org/KB/Polices/Documents/euthenasia.pdf>

RELEASE TO NATURE

- bb. Any release program must be done under the current practices and regulations of the country.
- cc. Releases must follow the protocols defined by the ALPZA Conservation Program and based on the Guidelines for reintroductions and other translocations for conservation purposes (IUCN/SSC, 2013)⁵. No release program should be carried out without having carried out a veterinary examination that ensures the physical condition necessary for the release, and exposure of wild populations to diseases or parasites must be avoided.

DEATH OF ANIMALS UNDER OUR CARE

- dd. Cases of specimens found dead while in captivity must be recorded; Likewise, the cause of death should be determined as soon as possible. Unless there are reasons not to do so, a post-mortem examination should be performed for each animal that dies in captivity or during a reintroduction program, and it is recommended that biological material be preserved for genetic research and conservation.

USE OF ANIMALS IN PRESENTATIONS OR SHOWS

- ee. The use of animals in presentations or demonstrations is allowed under condition that high standards of animal welfare will be maintained, always carrying a clear message of education and conservation, without anthropomorphizing the species, and displaying the natural behaviors of the species.
- ff. In case there is any indication that the animal's welfare is being compromised, the presentation should be suspended.
- gg. When animals are not participating in presentations, the areas in which they are kept must observe the principles of animal welfare described above (e.g. space and complexity sufficient to express their natural behaviors, optimal housing conditions that include adequate shelter for the species, and environmental enrichment, as well as social interaction as appropriate for species and individuals).
- hh. Institutions must ensure that presentations or demonstrations of animals outside the zoo or aquarium do not affect the animals' welfare, or the safety of the companions or visitors, and should consider optimum animal welfare during transfer.
- ii. Any activity that affects the health or welfare of animals should be avoided.
- jj. All institutions with programs that include animal contact or interaction with visitors must have a clear and written policy. This should be widely known and applied by all personnel involved in these programs including, among others, health management such as control and prevention of zoonotic risk.

FAUNA TRAFFIC

- kk. All ALPZA institutions are responsible for denouncing the illegal traffic and trade of wild fauna and flora, and will report acts that support such offenses to the competent authorities.

⁵ IUCN/SSC (2013). Guidelines for Reintroductions and Other Conservation Translocations. Version 1.0 Gland, Switzerland: IUCN Species Survival Commission, viiii + 57 pp

ll. Campaigns will be implemented within the member institutions, to discourage and combat traffic.

mm Under no circumstances should an ALPZA member institution promote, through its activities, the illegal traffic of animals or plants, or their by-products.

RESEARCH

nn. ALPZA members undertake to participate in, promote and disseminate research with a view to supporting the conservation of species, ecosystems, and animal welfare.

oo. ALPZA members will not participate in research or related procedures involving tests on animals that cause suffering or go against current legislation.

RESOURCES MENTIONED IN THIS DOCUMENT

AVMA 2013. Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals: 2013 Edition. Available online:
www.avma.org/KB/Policies/Documents/euthanasia.pdf.

IUCN 2002. Technical Guidelines on the Management of Ex Situ Populations for Conservation

IUCN/SSC (2013). Guidelines for Reintroductions and Other Conservation Translocations. Version 1.0
Gland, Switzerland: IUCN Species Survival Commission, viiii + 57 pp.