



EAZA response to the evaluation of the EU Zoos Directive

Amsterdam, 23 November 2018: The European Commission has published its findings on the review of the EU Zoos Directive (Council Directive 1999/22/EC). The report, dated 6 November, recommends no change to the legislation, but calls for a number of measures to improve implementation and to raise the performance of zoos and aquariums in several areas. The European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA), was a key stakeholder in the process and has always been a strong advocate for the legislation; as such, EAZA welcomes the finding and commits to supporting the ongoing process of meeting the requirements outlined in the report, specifically:

1. The need for a Stakeholder Platform to help all parties to improve implementation and enforcement at a Member State level, as proposed by EAZA during the evaluation process
2. The building of Member State capacity to carry out zoo licensing inspections by expert personnel with good knowledge of wild animal husbandry and *ex situ* management
3. The need for raised standards of husbandry, welfare and record keeping among zoos and aquariums not affiliated to national or regional accrediting associations. EAZA commits to continuing to openly provide its Standards and Best Practice Guidelines as a reference for this improvement, and to provide tailor made technical assistance programmes for appropriate partner institutions.
4. The promotion of EU Life funds among zoological institutions as a tool for the support of *in situ* conservation initiatives led by them
5. The ongoing need for training and professional development among zoo and aquarium staff, as typified by the EAZA Academy. EAZA has also been instrumental in the development of the European Professional Zookeeper Qualification Framework, an Erasmus+ funded project that is freely available to assist institutional staff to increase their expertise
6. The need to increase the amount and quality of research carried out by zoos and aquariums, and carried out through routes including the peer-reviewed Journal of Zoo and Aquarium Research, funded by EAZA

EAZA also agrees with the report's authors that there are no significant contradictions between the Zoos Directive and other legal acts including the Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species (IAS); however, EAZA will continue to push for exemptions for zoos and aquariums where the implementation of the IAS Regulation will jeopardise the ability of institutions to meet their conservation, education and research obligations to the Zoos Directive.

EAZA stands ready to assist in any suitable capacity and would encourage Member State authorities to contact us or National Zoo Association Members of EAZA for consultancy on next steps for the better implementation of the Directive.

For more information, contact:

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About the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria: The membership organization of Europe's most progressive zoological institutions, the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria comprises more than 400 zoos, aquariums and other institutions across 47 countries, collaborating for the advancement of conservation, research and education. EAZA is a significant stakeholder in the fight to protect the future of the natural world, both in Europe and across the world.