

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Johannesburg (South Africa), 24 September – 5 October 2016

ESTABLISHING AND WORKING WITH RESCUE CENTRES DESIGNATED UNDER CITES

This document has been submitted by Costa Rica*, in relation to agenda item 34 on *Disposal of illegally-traded and confiscated specimens of Appendix-I, -II and -III species.*

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

ESTABLISHING AND WORKING WITH RESCUE CENTRES DESIGNATED UNDER CITES

A White Paper Prepared by Members of the Species Survival
Network (SSN) Animals in Captivity Working Group (AiCWG)

September 2016

Authors and Compilers:

Ronald Orenstein, Consultant, Humane Society International

Masha Kalinina, International Trade Policy Specialist, Humane Society International



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Executive Summary..... | 2 |
| Part I: Introduction and Methodology..... | 6 |
| 1. Introduction | 6 |
| 2. Sources of Information | 8 |
| Part II: Findings | 8 |
| 1. Importance of Rescue Centres..... | 8 |
| 2. Designating a Rescue Centre | 9 |
| 3. Criteria for Selecting a Rescue Centre for Designation | 10 |
| 4. Relationship between Rescue Centres and Governments | 15 |
| 5. Transfer of Animals to the Rescue Centre | 16 |
| 6. Quarantine | 18 |
| 7. Responsibility for Animal Care..... | 19 |
| 8. Outplacement of Animals from a Rescue Centre | 20 |
| 9. Role of Rescue Centres in Prosecutions | 21 |
| 10. Training..... | 22 |
| 11. Consultation, Public Policy and Outreach..... | 24 |
| 12. Reporting Requirements | 25 |
| 13. Funding Arrangements..... | 25 |
| 14. General Recommendations..... | 26 |
| Annex A | 28 |
| Annex B | 29 |

Executive Summary

CITES Article VIII requires Parties to provide for confiscation of specimens, and in the case of live animals, either their return to the State of export or placement with a *rescue centre* defined as “an institution designated by a Management Authority to look after the welfare of living specimens” (CITES Article VIII, paragraphs 1, 4, and 5).

Some Parties have designated appropriate rescue centres, have a well-coordinated working relationship with them, and are therefore able to ensure long-term care for confiscated animals as well as rehabilitation or release if appropriate. Unfortunately, not all CITES Parties have formally designated rescue centres. If a rescue centre is not available, confiscated live specimens may end up in inappropriate places such as commercial breeding facilities, or with unlicensed individuals unqualified to care for the animals. In worst case scenarios specimens may be unnecessarily euthanized, or not confiscated at all.

Rescue centres can serve a critical role for CITES Parties. Their staff can offer expertise directly to the government in identifying, handling, transporting, housing, and caring for specimens, or can train government representatives in these skills. Rescue centres can keep detailed records which may prove invaluable for law enforcement purposes (e.g. as evidence in prosecutions). Rescue centres can also help ensure that confiscated animals are properly managed and cared for, welfare standards are complied with, and animals are not sold, stolen, permitted to re-enter trade, or improperly released.

No CITES-approved guidance exists on designating and working with rescue centres. This white paper is intended to facilitate the establishment of such guidance. To prepare it, the SSN Animals in Captivity Working Group members distributed a 23-question survey to qualified rescue centres in critical regions, including Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Fifteen responses were received from centres operating in thirteen countries. These responses, as well as additional comments from rescue centre networks, form the basis for the key recommendations offered below.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS



Designating a Rescue Centre

- Governments should establish or adopt appropriate national welfare standards for keeping confiscated wildlife in captivity.
- All facilities must be properly vetted and be designated only if issued appropriate credentials.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or equivalent should be signed between the government and the rescue centre.



Criteria for Designation

- Purpose-built rescue centres should be selected over commercial breeding facilities or unlicensed individuals.
- The rescue centre must have well-trained staff, suitable amenities, access to needed resources and financial security.
- Rescue centre membership in an umbrella organisation or network (e.g., Global Federal of Animal Sanctuaries, European Alliance of Rescue Centres and Sanctuaries, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance) can strengthen its credentials and provide additional assistance.
- Rescue centre location may be critical to ensuring rapid and efficient transfers from points of confiscation.
- Rescue centres may accept a wide range of species, or specialize in certain taxa only.
- Designating multiple rescue centres allows the option for rescue centres to specialize in specific species.
- If lifetime care is needed and a country lacks the necessary facilities, the government should consider placement in another country where appropriate.



Relationship with Government

- A partnership, preferably based on established written protocols and agreements, is essential.
- It may be advisable for rescue centres to have specific staff dedicated to work with the government.
- Relationships may be unnecessarily complicated by lack of wildlife expertise of government officials, high rates of government employee turnover, and multiple layers of bureaucracy.



Transfer of Animals to the Rescue Centre

- Transfer of confiscated specimens to a rescue centre should be as rapid and efficient as possible.
- Government approval for transfer should be expedited to minimize the time an animal is held by the police or customs.
- Government should either allocate transport vehicles and appropriate equipment (e.g. cages) for transfer, or offer necessary financial/logistical support to rescue centres.
- Government personnel handling and transferring wildlife should be properly trained, or should designate handling and transfer to qualified rescue centre staff.
- Animals should be placed with rescue centres based on already-concluded protocols, known to the confiscating officers, setting out what types of animals a centre is able and willing to accept.



Quarantine

- Rescue centres with quarantine facilities should be authorized to provide quarantine services as required by national law.
- Rescue centres with quarantine facilities should meet all required protocols to prevent the spread of pathogens.
- Rescue centres without quarantine facilities should be authorized to receive animals after quarantine at an appropriate facility.



Responsibility for Animal Care

- Rescue centres should be authorized to make day-to-day decisions regarding animal care.
- Responsibility for decisions with permanent consequences (e.g., sterilization or euthanasia) should be clearly spelled out in any protocols between the rescue centre and the government.



Outplacement of Animals from a Rescue Centre

- Placement with the rescue centre may be temporary pending return to the country of origin, to the wild, or permanent placement.
- Outplacement policy, including tracking of animals after placement, should be a part of any agreement or protocols between the government and the rescue centre.

- If government approval for outplacement is required, the decision should involve only one agency to avoid delays.
- The rescue centre should have an advisory role in determining initial outplacement.



Role of Rescue Centres in Prosecutions

- Confiscated live animal specimens, or reports as to their origin, identification and veterinary condition, may be required as evidence in prosecutions.
- To avoid unnecessary stress on confiscated animals, arrangements should be made to allow rescue centres to act as agents for the court, able to keep specimens in their care on behalf of the court.



Training

- Rescue centres should be authorized by the government to provide training in wildlife handling to customs officials, law enforcement officers, and others directly involved in the confiscation of animals, especially dangerous ones.



Consultation, Public Policy and Outreach

- Knowledgeable rescue centre staff should be viewed as sources of assistance in the development of policies relating to the regulation of wildlife trade.
- Governments should look upon public outreach and education programs offered by rescue centres as critical elements of national demand reduction efforts.



Reporting Requirements

- Governments should provide details of animal confiscations to rescue centres.
- Rescue centres must maintain thorough records (e.g., logbooks, computer database) to guide future care, to provide a history of exchanges with the government, and as evidence in court cases.
- Agreements between governments and rescue centres should set out the nature and frequency of reports that the rescue centre is required to submit.



Funding Arrangements

- As rescue centres maintain animals in their care on the government's behalf, in-kind and direct financial assistance from the government may be critical to rescue centre operations and should be provided where possible.

Part I: Introduction and Methodology

1. Introduction

1.1. Article VIII, paragraph 1, of the CITES Convention mandates as follows:

The Parties shall take appropriate measures to enforce the provisions of the present Convention and to prohibit trade in specimens in violation thereof. These shall include measures:
to penalize trade in, or possession of, such specimens, or both; and
to provide for the confiscation or return to the State of export of such specimens.

1.2. Confiscated specimens frequently include living animals, and CITES contemplates that Parties may designate certain institutions as rescue centres for their care. Article VIII, paragraphs 4 and 5, of the Convention read as follows (emphasis added):

4. Where a living specimen is confiscated as a result of measures referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article:

a) the specimen shall be entrusted to a Management Authority of the State of confiscation;

*b) the Management Authority shall, after consultation with the State of export, return the specimen to that State at the expense of that State, or to **a rescue centre or such other place as the Management Authority deems appropriate and consistent with the purposes of the present Convention;** and*

*c) the Management Authority may obtain the advice of a Scientific Authority, or may, whenever it considers it desirable, consult the Secretariat in order to facilitate the decision under sub-paragraph (b) of this paragraph, **including the choice of a rescue centre or other place.***

*5. **A rescue centre as referred to in paragraph 4 of this Article means an institution designated by a Management Authority to look after the welfare of living specimens, particularly those that have been confiscated.***

1.3. Although it is not mandatory for a Party to designate rescue centres, doing so can assist in fulfilling a number of the objectives of the CITES Convention:

1.3.1. A properly-functioning rescue centre can be instrumental in reducing mortality of live animals in trade. As individual mortality can have a detrimental effect on the survival of species and populations in trade, reducing mortality helps ensure that trade in such species will not “endanger further their survival” (Article II, paragraph 1 [for species on Appendix I]) or “avoid utilization incompatible with their survival” (Article II, paragraph 2 [for species on Appendix II]).

- 1.3.2. Article VIII, paragraph 3, requires that “The Parties shall ensure further that all living specimens, during any period of transit, holding or shipment, are properly cared for so as to minimize the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment”; this language, in the terms of Article VIII, applies to all specimens, including those confiscated under the terms of Article VIII, paragraph 1. This is similar to the requirement in Articles III, IV and V that, as a condition of the grant of import and export permits, living specimens traded under the Convention are required to be prepared and shipped in such a way as to minimize the same risks.
- 1.3.3. Article III, paragraph 3(b) requires, as a condition for the grant of an import permit for species listed on Appendix I, that “the proposed recipient of a living specimen is suitably equipped to house and care for it.” Again, although this language refers to legally-traded specimens, it is reasonable to assume that confiscated specimens should be afforded the same degree of housing and care in order to fulfill the terms of Article VIII, paragraph 3.
- 1.4.** In addition, properly-functioning rescue centres, integrated into regulatory systems for CITES implementation and management, can aid customs and other enforcement officers by providing expertise and assistance in the confiscation and identification of living specimens, especially in situations in which the lack of such expertise might pose risks both to the persons and animals involved. Rescue centres, therefore, not only help to fulfill the animal welfare requirements of the Convention, but can be valuable tools in ensuring that the Convention is properly and effectively enforced.
- 1.5.** Despite this, no guidance exists either to assist Parties in designating rescue centres or incorporating them into their national CITES implementation and enforcement structures, or to aid the Secretariat in providing advice to Parties on the choice of a rescue centre as contemplated in Article VIII para. 4(c).
- 1.6.** Resolution Conf. 10.7 (Rev. CoP15) on the *Disposal of confiscated live specimens of species included in the Appendices* provides valuable guidelines on the options for dealing with living animal specimens, but, beyond noting that “Rescue centres, established specifically to treat injured or confiscated animals, are sponsored by a number of humane organisations in many countries”, the guidelines say nothing about either the process of designation of such centres or the most effective means for government agencies to work with them.
- 1.7.** Designating an appropriate rescue centre, and incorporating its functions into national CITES implementation policy, requires an understanding both of the type of facility that is best suited to perform the tasks assigned to it and the most efficient and effective ways for government officials to interact with it once designated.
- 1.8.** The present document is intended to be both a recommendation to Parties that guidelines should be developed and adopted to assist in gaining that understanding, and a preliminary summary of information to inform such guidelines based on the

combined expertise of rescue centre operators surveyed by the SSN Animals in Captivity Working Group (AICWG).

1.9. We believe that there is a need for generally-accepted standards for the designation of rescue centres, equivalent to the accreditation requirements that have been developed for zoos and aquaria. Parties may also wish to consider whether CITES should establish a registry of designated rescue centres, particularly for high-value species such as great apes, to assist in the sharing of information among centres in different countries and to better establish the provenance of stolen animals that end up being reintroduced into trade.

1.10. This paper is primarily directed at governments seeking to designate rescue centres and establish working relationships with them, rather than at the operators of existing or planned rescue centres. Some observations on the responsibilities of rescue centres have, however, been included.

2. Sources of Information

2.1. The Species Survival Network (SSN) is a coalition of over 100 organisations operating in some 40 countries. Many of our members, including members of the SSN Animals in Captivity Working Group, have extensive experience in the operation of rescue centres, including centres designated by CITES Management Authorities. This document draws on the expertise and experience of SSN members in order to present what we believe to be current best practices for the establishment and designation of rescue centres, and for their integration into national CITES management. Seven of the fifteen surveyed rescue centres are members of SSN.

2.2. The information below is drawn from answers to a survey circulated by the AICWG, as provided by fifteen rescue centre organisations operating in thirteen countries (see Annex A) as well as additional comments from rescue centre operators and others, including the European Alliance of Rescue Centres and Sanctuaries (EARS). Seven of the fifteen organisations are currently designated as CITES rescue centres. One formerly operated a designated centre but no longer does so. The remaining organisations are not designated as rescue centres, but either are currently operating as care centres for confiscated wildlife or, in one case, did so formerly.

Part II: Findings

1. Importance of Rescue Centres

1.1. Rescue centres offer critical expertise that government representatives responsible for handling, transporting, and disposing of confiscated live specimens may lack. Qualified rescue centre staff should have the ability to identify species, to advise if the species in question have a protected status, and to offer veterinary expertise, appropriate equipment and logistical support for transport, and ultimately shelter for confiscated animals.

- 1.2.** The majority of rescue centres that participated in this analysis provide some type of training to government authorities, whether to the police, wildlife agents, customs officials, or otherwise (see Section 10). Advising on proper handling techniques and safety protocols helps ensure safety for both animals and people involved in confiscations. For example, Guatemala's Antigua Exotic offers training on safe handling and first aid to wildlife officers who have to handle venomous snakes.
- 1.3.** Rescue centres should have the expertise to handle and transport animals so as to prevent the potential spread of disease from confiscated animals to other animals or to humans (zoonosis). Where quarantine is required this should be carried out either at the rescue centre itself or an approved quarantine facility. Some rescue centres are equipped to receive confiscated animals only after they have been initially quarantined elsewhere.
- 1.4.** Once an animal is taken in, rescue centres should keep detailed records on circumstances under which the animal was confiscated, its condition, care required, and how the animal is disposed of (rehabilitation, release, euthanasia, etc.), as well as on animals that have been refused. Such records are essential to governments for law enforcement purposes (in building cases against perpetrator(s)) and help authorities evaluate which species are most targeted by poachers and wildlife traffickers, as well as the overall scale of illegal trade. For example, Save Vietnam's Wildlife collects information on pangolins confiscated around the world, and this has helped inform the development of CITES proposals aimed at increasing protection for pangolin species from unsustainable trade.
- 1.5.** Rescue centres provide care for animals that in some cases may be critical evidence in law enforcement proceedings. Many of the rescue centres that participated in this analysis play a role in criminal or administrative proceedings, testifying in court or submitting as evidence documentation about the animals they care for.
- 1.6.** Placing confiscated animals with rescue centres, versus other often ill-equipped or inappropriate facilities (e.g. unlicensed private individuals) can help ensure that animals are properly managed, cared for to ensure high levels of welfare and are not used for breeding purposes, sold off, stolen, permitted to re-enter trade, or released in improper habitats. Rescue Centres can also help to ensure animals are suitably cared for and improving the possibility of rare animals being successfully returned to the wild.

2. Designating a Rescue Centre

- 2.1.** Any facility which is designated as a rescue centre should have appropriate credentials, and its facilities should be vetted, prior to being designated, by knowledgeable persons with an understanding of the animals in question. This should include an on-site visit to ensure national welfare standards for keeping wildlife in captivity are being met (see Para 2.2).

- 2.2.** Legal arrangements should be created between the government and designated rescue centre(s) from the outset. Governments should, with the help of third parties including rescue centres, establish appropriate national welfare standards for keeping wildlife in captivity should none currently exist. Almost all of our respondents believe that it is crucial to have a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or equivalent document signed between the designated rescue centre and the appropriate government department or ministry (normally this would be the CITES Management Authority for the Party).
- 2.3.** Failure to conclude such an agreement may lead to confusion as to the scope of responsibility of the centre and the appropriate lines of authority and communication, and in one case may have contributed to a breakdown of relations between the centre and the central government. However, in some cases it may be necessary for the centre to begin accepting confiscated specimens before a full MoU can be negotiated, signed and approved.
- 2.4.** Of the seven responding organisations currently designated as rescue centres, one applied for and was awarded the designation through an open public tender process. At least three other organisations have signed a MoU with the designating government. Animals Asia Foundation signed a MoU with the Vietnam Government in 2005, setting out how the rescue centre would function and the responsibility of both sides, and in 2009, the actual construction of this rescue centre was approved by the Prime Minister of Vietnam. AAP Primadomus, Spain, signed a collaboration agreement (Convenio de Colaboración) with the Spanish government in 2013. ARCAS (Guatemala) is officially designated under Article 29 of the Protected Areas Law (4-89) for all confiscated animals from the Maya Biosphere Reserve. ARCAS and El Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas/The National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP) signed a mutual cooperation agreement in December 1991.

3. Criteria for Selecting a Rescue Centre for Designation

3.1. Nature of the Facility

- 3.1.1.** Designated rescue centres should, depending on available resources and capacity and subject to agreement, be prepared to accept and care for confiscated animals that they may receive on short notice, at any time of the day or night, and in unpredictable numbers. They should be able to maintain animals in their care in good health and under appropriate conditions for unspecified periods or, in some cases, permanently. They should be available and operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There may be reasonable limits to this. Animals Asia in Vietnam, for example, is able to receive bears until it reaches a 200 bear capacity.
- 3.1.2.** A rescue centre being considered for designation must therefore be reliable, stable, well-staffed, and financially secure (but see Section 13 on funding), and able to respond to emergency situations. It must have adequate space to receive the expected flow of animals, with appropriate enclosures for the

species it accepts (see Section 4.3), strong health and safety measures including species-appropriate veterinary care, and access to electricity and water supplies. If the centre has quarantine facilities, they should preferably be isolated from other parts of the centre. As noted previously, some rescue centres are equipped to receive confiscated animals only after they have been initially quarantined elsewhere.

3.1.3. Physical security may also be an issue. One of our respondents closed its facilities primarily because it could no longer guarantee security for its volunteers and staff. Governments designating rescue centres should be prepared to assist in this area, particularly for centres holding animals of high value that could be a target for thieves.

3.1.4. Staff at a rescue centre should be well-trained professionals with skills and education relevant to their specific tasks (although some centres also encourage volunteers, either to assist in care or as part of outreach activities). Qualifications for staff with responsibility for animal care should include husbandry and animal management experience and veterinary skills. Staff interacting with government officials should be able to maintain good relationships. Ideally a rescue centre should also establish relationships with outside experts (e.g. at universities or hospitals) to assist in special situations.

3.1.5. Many rescue centres unfortunately fail to meet these qualifications, often because they do not have the necessary financial resources. Care should be taken in selecting (or establishing) a rescue centre to ensure that these essential requirements can be met and that the animals receive appropriate treatment and, if necessary, life-long care.

3.1.6. Where appropriate, centres may be part of a broader umbrella organisation or network (e.g. the Pan-African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA), with 22 organisations in 13 African countries,¹ the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS)² with many accredited or verified sanctuaries around the world, or the European Alliance of Rescue Centres and Sanctuaries (EARS)³ with 15 organisations in 12 countries (see Annex A). Membership can be an additional guarantee of stability, and can strengthen the centre's *bona fides* as well as provide it with support, advice and assistance from the network. Membership also guards against placement of animals with inappropriate facilities, such as those that prioritize financial profit, breed and/or sell animals, or lack adequate expertise and resources.

3.1.7. A purpose-built rescue facility, if available, should be preferred as a designated centre for confiscated animals over a zoo or commercial breeding

1 <https://www.pasaprimates.org/>

2 <http://www.sanctuaryfederation.org/gfas/about-gfas/gfas-sanctuaries/>

3 <http://www.ears.org/>

facility. A purpose-built facility, if properly constructed, operated and staffed, will generally be better than a zoo in dealing with animals arriving under emergency conditions, not intended or suitable for public exhibit and, in general, intended to be held for only a short time (see Section 8). Some facilities, such as ARCAS (Guatemala), allow controlled visits by members of the public to non-restricted areas (for example, the quarantine zone is restricted) as part of their outreach programmes, while others such as Zoo Ave (Costa Rica) are closed to the public.

- 3.1.8. In general, compromised and stressed animals that may have endured abuse, starvation and neglect should be shielded from the public and allowed to return to an improved state of physical and psychological health as quickly as possible.
- 3.1.9. Except under special circumstances most rescue centres do not allow the animals in their care to breed, both to avoid the production of surplus animals and to allow staff to concentrate on the confiscated animals in their care. AAP (Netherlands and Spain), for example, “applies permanent contraception to all our animals unless they are endangered in the wild (according to the IUCN Red List) or they have official breeding programs (EAZA EEP and ESB). For confiscated specimens we always ask the authorities for permission before performing sterilization. Exceptions on veterinary and behaviour (sic) grounds can take place but only when justified.” In another example, Animals Asia in Vietnam has an MoU with the government that it will not serve to breed bears or use bears for any economic purposes.
- 3.1.10. Many sanctuaries, particularly in developing countries, lack the appropriate expertise, facilities or funds to operate fully as a designated rescue centre. Some of these could benefit greatly from government assistance, but they should not be allowed to take in animals they are unable to care for as they may lack the expertise (both behavioral and veterinary) or financial resources to ensure that good welfare standards are maintained.
- 3.1.11. Care should also be taken that no designated facility becomes a source, either inadvertently or deliberately, for confiscated animals or their offspring to be laundered back into trade. This is another reason for preferring a purpose-built centre committed to animal welfare, with a strict non-breeding and outplacement policy, over a commercial breeding facility. It is important for the authorities to realize that facilities and individuals offering to solve a problem in the short term might not always be the best partners in the long term, especially if the centre sacrifices quality of care or husbandry for speed, or is too closely associated with the wildlife trade industry.

3.2. Location

- 3.2.1. The location of a rescue centre may have considerable impact on its ability to accept confiscated specimens. The more easily and rapidly a specimen can be transferred from the point of confiscation to the centre, the more likely it is

that centre will be used and that the specimen will arrive at the centre in good health and condition. A centre's access to resources needed for transport and care (e.g. human resources) should also be an important consideration. Note that for some centres, for example those that operate in small countries, location proves less critical.

- 3.2.2. The responses to our survey reveal that the ideal location for a CITES rescue centre is likely to differ between primarily importing countries and primarily exporting countries. The key factor is proximity to the point of confiscation. For importing countries, this is likely to be at a port of entry such as an airport or shipping port. The centre operated by AAP Almere in the Netherlands, primarily a country of import, is located 50 km from Schiphol International Airport. The centre responded that "We believe distance can be an important factor, especially when confiscations take place in the airport. The sooner we can rescue and take care of the animals, the more chances they have to survive and the sooner the authorities find a solution to their problem."
- 3.2.3. For exporting countries, the confiscation point may be in or near a national park, wildlife refuge, or other protected area where law enforcement officials are more likely to intercept poachers taking native wildlife, and where confiscated animals can be rehabilitated and released into the wild. The ARCAS rescue centre in Guatemala, primarily a country of export, is located on the southern edge of the 21,602,04 km² Maya Biosphere Reserve, the second largest remaining block of tropical forest remaining in the Americas after Amazonia and one of the main sources for trafficked wildlife in the Central American isthmus. It is close to government-staffed checkpoints on roads exiting the reserve, which are the main points for confiscating wildlife in the country. ARCAS "is thus strategically located for receiving confiscated wildlife and for serving as a technical and training support centre for anti-trafficking activities in the region."
- 3.2.4. As Parties are free to designate more than one rescue centre, rescue centres can be designated in different areas depending on whether they are primarily receiving confiscated native wildlife or non-native specimens being brought illegally into the country. The Netherlands government established a system to designate partner rescue centres in 2001, and according to AAP Almere "at the present moment they have a well-established network of rescue centres for confiscated CITES animals."
- 3.2.5. Location becomes more critical in larger countries. The Animals Asia rescue centre in Vietnam is located about 90 minutes' drive north of Hanoi. This centre, which is specifically devoted to bears, can receive animals from any part of the country. Specimens confiscated in southern Vietnam, however, may take three days to reach the centre by road, increasing both the stress on the animals and the cost of transportation. Save Vietnam's Wildlife responded that "We travel over 1600km to rescue and release animals" and distance "affects the health of animals and survival rates" as well as increasing the costs. In

other countries, transportation difficulties (such as poor roads in rural areas) may hamper collection and transportation of specimens.

- 3.2.6. Respondents from smaller countries with good transportation networks (e.g. Belgium, Costa Rica, Guatemala) were less concerned about the negative effects of distance; Antigua Exotic (Guatemala), for example, reported that their centre was only 42 km from the country's main airport and that they could reach three different border crossing points (with Mexico, Honduras and El Salvador) in less than four hours.

3.3. Specialist vs. Generalist Facilities

- 3.3.1. Rescue centres may deal with a wide range of confiscated wild animals, or be restricted to a few or a single species only, depending on the facilities, staff, and expertise available, quarantine requirements, and on the arrangement with the designating government.
- 3.3.2. The ability to designate more than one rescue centre allows Parties the option of designating different centres to deal with specific types of animals. These could include centres dealing only with species having specialized requirements, or those representing a high proportion of confiscated animals. Animals should only go to facilities that are in a position to care for the species involved, and if more than one centre is designated, confiscating authorities must have clear guidance as to which facility is the appropriate one for a specific confiscated animal.
- 3.3.3. Rescue centres surveyed for this paper include those operating specialized facilities for mammals, focusing on Barbary macaques and big cats (AAP Primadomus, Spain) or dealing with a broader range of small to medium-sized species (AAP Almere, Netherlands; Tikki Hywood Foundation, Zimbabwe); bears only (Animals Asia, China and Vietnam); reptiles and amphibians (Antigua Exotic, Guatemala); and great apes and other primates (Ape Action Africa, Cameroon; Chimpanzee Conservation Center, Guinea). The agreement between Animals Asia and the Vietnamese government, for example, stipulates that only Asiatic Black Bears and Malayan Sun Bears can be transferred to the centre.
- 3.3.4. Respondents generally agreed that taxon-specific rescue centres, or centres with taxon-specific areas (such as ARCAS in Guatemala), were more effective, and were to be preferred if possible. A specialized rescue centre is more likely to have the appropriate knowledge, infrastructure, facilities and staff needed to offer the proper care to the animals it shelters. Having a specialized rescue centre may allow a government to direct resources more specifically to other species not cared for by the specialized facility, including supporting the development of further centres for these species.

- 3.3.5. Two rescue centres in Costa Rica (Tranquility Rescue Center; Zoo Ave) accept many species of bird and mammal. This may be a necessity for rescue centres operating in exporting countries, accepting animals directly from the field in areas where a wide range of species are targeted by poachers. Zoo Ave reported that “In general, we believe that a rescue centre with adequate infrastructure and a qualified staff should be able to receive all wildlife existing in the country.” [translated from Spanish]
- 3.3.6. Although specialist rescue centres dealing with specific taxa are to be preferred, having too many separate centres may be economically inefficient because of the degree of duplication necessary. Should governments feel it necessary to create their own rescue centres to fill any perceived gaps, this should be done in close consultation with experts aware of the difficulties involved; it may also, however, be better to direct the costs involved to existing centres so that they can expand their facilities to cover the perceived need.
- 3.3.7. For cases where lifetime care is needed, in countries where specialist facilities are either non-existent or only available for certain species, governments should consider moving the animals to a country where better facilities may exist. Otherwise, animals may end up in private hands or zoos. We should encourage governments to take a more international approach where appropriate, including working with the CITES Secretariat, for long-term placement of confiscated animals.

4. Relationship between Rescue Centres and Governments

- 4.1.** Open and active two-way communication based on established written protocols and agreements is essential between governments and individual rescue centres (or governments and a network of rescue centres). This is key for successful transfers of confiscated animals (see section 3.2) and appropriate disposition of these animals. Governments and rescue centres should see themselves as partners working to solve the problems raised by live animal confiscations, not only to help the animal(s) in need but to tackle the illegal trade that is the root of the problem. Political will is crucial if these aims are to be accomplished.
- 4.2.** Most of the organisations we surveyed reported “positive” to “very positive” relations with their governments, particularly when the relationship is based on a written MoU with clearly understood shared responsibilities, as well as when the relationship has existed for a long time and there is clear mutual benefit. For example, Save Vietnam’s Wildlife benefits from the relationship because they “have government staff working with us to secure permissions to rescue or release animals.” Animals Asia in Vietnam works closely with central and local forest protection staff during bear rescues.
- 4.3.** Good relationships are built on professional respect, mutual trust and an understanding that the government and the rescue centre are there to help each other, and not just in caring for confiscated animals. For example, Antigua Exotic

(Guatemala) - which specializes in reptiles and amphibians – receives 30% of its financial support from the government and in turn offers training and first aid techniques to the police wildlife service. Other rescue centres reported receiving other forms of support including rent-free land, as well as free access to electricity and water.

- 4.4.** Good relationships involve investment by both sides. It is advantageous for a rescue centre to have staff familiar with the relevant government regulations and procedures specifically designated to communicate with government officials, and seven of the organisations surveyed reported that they have done this (in two cases the designated person is the manager or CEO of the centre).
- 4.5.** AAP Almere (Netherlands) and AAP Primadomus designate staff as government contact persons to facilitate smooth and clear communications, and reports that this “has worked really well.” In Vietnam, Animals Asia’s External Affairs officer “works closely with central and local government officials to ensure fast transfer of bears following confiscations.” The director of the ARCAS Rescue Center in the Petén district of Guatemala liaises directly with local government officials, while the executive director in Guatemala City communicates with officials of CONAP and the central government.
- 4.6.** Relationships can, however, become complicated if several different government agencies deal with wildlife trafficking. Rescue centres may receive animals from a variety of sources, including firefighters and police, and rescue centre staff have to get along with them all – though the Tikki Hywood Foundation reported “very positive” relationships with Zimbabwe government officials in a number of positions, including Parks & Wildlife Management Authorities, magistrates, police, public prosecutors, and border control officers.
- 4.7.** High staff turnover within a single government department can also complicate the building of long-term relationships; one respondent reported that the rescue centre has become, as a result of high turnover, the “institutional memory” of the government department, with a direct role in training new staff.
- 4.8.** Good relationships depend particularly on governments ensuring that officials dealing with rescue centres understand and appreciate the rationale for, and the importance of confiscating, housing, rehabilitating, and, where appropriate, releasing wildlife. Some respondents complained of difficulties in working with customs officials and others with no, or a limited, understanding of which animals are CITES-listed or of the country’s wildlife laws.

5. Transfer of Animals to the Rescue Centre

- 5.1.** On confiscation of a live animal, it is crucial that the appropriate rescue centre (should more than one have been designated) be contacted and involved with its care and transfer as rapidly and expeditiously as possible. Choice of a centre must be based, as far as is possible, on already-concluded protocols, known to the

confiscating officers, setting out what types of animals a centre is ready, willing, and able to accept. Rescue centres must have the established written right to refuse animals they do not feel able, for any reason, to care for.

- 5.2.** We have already noted the importance of location in selecting the appropriate rescue centre for designation. Distance or travel time alone, however, are not the only difficulties faced in transporting confiscated animals to a rescue centre. Respondents in some countries cited bureaucratic interference (requiring several stopovers for specimens in transit) and lack of government vehicles designated for the exclusive use of wildlife officers as factors preventing speedy transfer of animals to the centre.
- 5.3.** Transportation of specimens may be carried out by the rescue centre itself (AAP Primadomus in Spain and in the Netherlands use their own ambulance, modified to work under quarantine conditions) or by the confiscating authority. In Zimbabwe, the Tikki Hywood Foundation is able to receive specimens by air from remote parts of the country, and air transport may be the fastest way to transfer specimens to centres in remote areas.
- 5.4.** Some rescue centres stated that they themselves are best equipped for transfer and government authorities sometimes lack the appropriate handling expertise, veterinary necessities, equipment (e.g. cages), or otherwise, to transport the animals appropriately. However, rescue centres cannot be required to bear the full cost and responsibility of transport. A cooperative relationship is encouraged. If a rescue centre is in charge of transport, it should receive assistance from the government either in terms of funding, logistics, or other support. If the government is in charge of transport, it must receive training and information on proper animal handling and care, as well as have appropriate equipment. Of course in many cases both sides will be engaged and should work well together.
- 5.5.** Save Vietnam's Wildlife recommends that rescue centres set up a "Rapid Response Team" to provide emergency care for confiscated animals and also offer guidance and technical expertise to government officers, thus improving their capacity.
- 5.6.** Some respondents expressed that when delay in transfer is due to limited availability of government vehicles or fuel, and the delay could put the animal's health at risk, these centres are able to step in and arrange the transfer privately. Other centres, however, are hampered by limited resources or government bureaucracy (for example when an animal must be kept at a police station or customs office) and cannot assist in the transfer. One centre reported delays of two to seven days, while another centre reported up to two or three weeks before approval for a transfer could be obtained from central and provincial government authorities. Parties should understand that when an animal is confiscated, time is of the essence if it is to be transferred successfully to a rescue centre with minimal risk to its well-being or survival. Management Authorities should work with rescue centres to identify bureaucratic roadblocks and, if possible, reduce or eliminate them.

5.7. When asked what they would consider to be the best and most effective means of ensuring that the transfer of confiscated specimens is handled with minimum harm to either animals or people, respondents offered the following recommendations:

- The rescue centre and the government should work together to establish standardized, written protocols for the transfer of confiscated specimens.
- When a confiscation takes place, the relevant rescue centre should be informed immediately so that it can make arrangements to receive the animal and, if necessary, assist in handling the specimen during transit. It is important that the centre that has been tasked with receiving the confiscated animals be on hand as soon as possible to minimize stress for the animals involved.
- The persons in charge of transport must be qualified and know how to handle the animals, and if possible should have specific expertise with respect to the species being transferred; trained rescue centre staff will generally be better qualified and more experienced at this than government officers, and should be on hand, if not in charge, to prevent injury to either animals or people. ARCAS staff in Guatemala, for example, have received specific training in transportation of animals from the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which is implemented during all transports in which they take part.
- Veterinary care, including sedation if necessary, should be available as soon as possible after confiscation, either once the animals arrive at the centre or before if triage is required.
- If possible the transfer should be carried out in a vehicle modified for the transportation of animals. Adequate crates or other transport enclosures, with appropriate lighting, ventilation and humane restraints as necessary, should be available. If possible these should be specialized enclosures designed to meet the specific requirements of the species being transferred.

6. Quarantine

6.1. In many cases confiscated animals will be subject to quarantine requirements that must be complied with by both confiscating authorities and rescue centres. Doing so, however, can result in additional delays in transferring animals to a rescue centre.

6.2. Where quarantine is required this should be carried out either at the rescue centre itself or an approved quarantine facility. Some rescue centres are equipped to receive confiscated animals only after they have been initially quarantined elsewhere.

6.3. Almost all of the rescue centres in this survey are able to provide their own quarantine facilities, and use them, whether required to by the government or not,

for all animals entering the rescue centre. This is necessary in order to ensure that pathogens are not spread to other animals in the facility, or to human staff.

- 6.4.** However, developing countries generally have small budgets for wildlife conservation, which means insufficient resources are allocated for wildlife quarantine. Save Vietnam's Wildlife reported that many other rescue centres in Vietnam do not have quarantine facilities, or even appropriate animal enclosures.
- 6.5.** In some cases, rescue centres have been approved to act as official quarantine locations. AAP Almere (Netherlands) and AAP Primadomus (Spain) have been authorized to act as quarantine centres under the Balai Directive of the European Union (Council Directive 92/65/EEC), which allows them to receive animals of unknown origin. AAP Primadomus, which deals primarily with primates and big cats, and AAP Almere (Netherlands), which deals with primates and other small-medium mammals, follow especially stringent quarantine protocols because of the risk of transferring animal-borne diseases (zoonoses) from primates to humans.
- 6.6.** As quarantine is already part of the standard operating procedure for most rescue centres, it makes sense to authorize designated facilities to provide quarantine services, as required by national law, to the extent they are able or willing to do so. Quarantine protocols should be developed cooperatively between the rescue centre and the government. For example, ARCAS (Guatemala), "together with CONAP, and with the support of CAFTA/HSI [Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement/Humane Society International], [has] developed quarantine and other protocols (diets, rehab, release...) which apply to animals received by us, by CONAP and by other institutions." Alternative arrangements may have to be made for species that the centre is unable to deal with.

7. Responsibility for Animal Care

- 7.1.** Rescue centres are normally free to make day-to-day decisions about the animals in their care. This is essential because of the need to make immediate choices regarding veterinary care, and other matters concerning an animal's health or welfare, without having to wait for a government response. Rescue centres should either have veterinarians on staff or have ready access to veterinary care. Animals Asia has 24-hour veterinary care at both sites in China and Vietnam; the Tikki Hywood Foundation (Zimbabwe) also has access to a 24-hour veterinarian.
- 7.2.** A special case, however, arises for a decision with permanent consequences, such as sterilization or euthanasia. The responsibility for such decisions should be clearly spelled out in any protocols between a rescue centre and the government; Zoo Ave (Costa Rica) and ARCAS (Guatemala) have concluded specific euthanasia protocols with their governments. All medical treatments at ARCAS are at the discretion of its animal health professionals, including euthanasia.
- 7.3.** Only four of our respondents reported that they had to ask permission from their governments in such special cases. In one case (AAP, Netherlands and Spain)

permission has never been refused; in another (no longer operating), the necessary authorization rarely arrived. In others, centres retained discretion to perform euthanasia but had to keep the relevant government authorities informed when they did so. Save Vietnam's Wildlife reported that the government would "accept euthanasia for untreatable animals, but hardly accept(s) euthanasia for common species."

8. Outplacement of Animals from a Rescue Centre

- 8.1.** Although rescue centres can (and should) be responsible for veterinary and other decisions for animals in their care (see Section 7), they normally do not have (or in some cases do not wish to have) title to them. Unless no other alternative is available, in most but not all cases, animals in a rescue centre are expected to be there temporarily until they can be placed in a permanent facility, returned to their country of origin or rehabilitated to the wild, preferably in accordance with IUCN guidelines⁴ (exceptions are the bear rescue centres operated by Animals Asia in China and Vietnam, where bears are normally expected to be held permanently). Rescue centres have a limited capacity, often caring for more animals than they are designed to hold, and may need to transfer animals that no longer need their care in order to make room for new arrivals.
- 8.2.** Outplacement policy, including tracking of animals after placement to prevent misuse, should be a part of any agreement between a government and a designated rescue centre. The agreement between AAP and the authorities (both in the Netherlands and in Spain) covers outplacement. Primadomus, which deals mostly with primates, outplaces animals with their established social groups unless a court orders them to be returned to their original owner, and microchips its animals using microchips provided by the CITES central office in Spain. Primadomus must notify the government and obtain approval before outplacement.
- 8.3.** Rehabilitation and release of animals by Zoo Ave (Costa Rica) is carried out using established protocols and with the approval of relevant government institutions. In a number of countries the government must approve any transfer of animals out of a rescue centre (though this is not the case for Natuurhulpcentrum (Belgium) unless an export permit is needed). In China, Democratic Republic of Congo, The Netherlands, and Spain (and undoubtedly other Parties), government authorities retain legal ownership of all confiscated animals.
- 8.4.** AAP always keeps the ownership of the outplaced animals unless they were confiscated. AAP stated that "In the cases where we receive a confiscated animal, in Spain they remain the property of the authorities, while in the Netherlands the ownership is transferred from the Dutch government to AAP." Outplacement organisations vary from country to country, and may include other rescue centres,

⁴ IUCN/SSC (2013). *Guidelines for Reintroductions and Other Conservation Translocations*. Version 1.0. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN Species Survival Commission, viiii + 57pp.
http://iucnsscrsg.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=197&Itemid=590

professional zoos (not in the case of primates from JACK in the DRC), or approved private owners. AAP, as a matter of policy, does not outplace animals to private owners and/or private zoos, unless in the case of a legal case the original owner is acquitted and the animals must be returned. Zoo Ave's policy is not to transfer to private collections or zoos.

- 8.5.** Some centres recommend that although a process of government approval for initial outplacement from a rescue centre is key, only one government body should be responsible to grant approval because otherwise the process may become too tedious and time-consuming; this can also have negative conservation outcomes.
- 8.6.** The rescue centre can and should have an advisory role in outplacement, both of individual animals and in terms of general policy. AAP maintains an outplacement department based in Almere (Netherlands) that works for both locations. Under its official agreement with the Government of Guinea, no animal can be removed from the Chimpanzee Conservation Center (including reintroductions into the wild) without the Center's consent, though reintroductions also require government authorization. No animal is allowed to leave the Tikki Hywood Foundation centre in Zimbabwe unless it has been discussed and agreed to with the necessary authorities.⁵

9. Role of Rescue Centres in Prosecutions

- 9.1.** In some cases rescue centres are in contact with public informants, and therefore play a role in notifying the government about wildlife trafficking activities.
- 9.2.** Confiscated live animal specimens, or reports as to their origin, identification and veterinary condition, may be required as evidence in prosecutions for wildlife trafficking offenses. If the animals themselves are required, this may conflict with the need to transfer animals to a rescue centre as quickly and expeditiously as possible. This is especially true if they have to be maintained at a courthouse, under conditions that could be detrimental to their health, wellbeing or survival. If the confiscated animals are native species, and the intention is to return them to the wild, ongoing legal cases may slow down or prevent this process as long as the specimens continue to be required by the courts.
- 9.3.** We therefore recommend that, as part of the agreements between governments and designated rescue centres, arrangements be made to allow rescue centres to act as agents for the courts, able to keep specimens in their care on the court's behalf. There should also be a duty placed on the rescue centre to maintain records of information that the court may need, and to submit such records to prosecuting authorities or to the court as required.

⁵ "As the THF does not support any animal being exploited through monetary avenues eg public viewing and voluntary tourism, wherever possible the animals that come to our centre are released. If they cannot be released for whatever reason, then those animals will remain with us in our care."

9.4. According to our respondents, arrangements of this kind already exist in some countries (but not in others). The Tikki Hywood Foundation (Zimbabwe) “is involved throughout the whole process from rescue to prosecution to conviction, to sentencing and following up if the accused has remained in prison.” Save Vietnam’s Wildlife provides advice on wildlife laws, and has weighed in on the extent of punishment warranted for various degrees of wildlife crime.

9.5. An agreement allowing for “advanced” proof of evidence operates in the Petén Department of Guatemala (but not in the rest of the country). It involves the ARCAS rescue centre, the Ministerio Público (Justice Department), the Environmental Crimes Court, and CONAP, and allows animals to be presented to the court before a trial and be accepted as documented evidence for the trial itself. In twelve cases, as of November 2015, courts had been reconvened at the rescue centre to allow this evidence to be presented without having to move the animals.⁶

10. Training

10.1. Customs officials, law enforcement officers and others directly involved in the confiscation of animals may, through lack of knowledge and experience and absence of proper training, risk harm to animals, to themselves, or others. Uncertainty as to what procedures to follow can lead to unnecessary destruction of specimens (in some cases inhumane euthanasia), or to officials refusing to carry out confiscations in the first place. Both extremes represent enforcement failures, as prosecutions may not be brought and evidence from confiscated specimens may not be available. Smugglers may take advantage of this, for example by including dangerous animals such as venomous snakes in shipments of contraband on the expectation that enforcement officers will avoid dealing with them.

10.2. Rescue centre staff, besides handling confiscated animals directly, can (and in many cases do) provide enforcement officers with the training they need to overcome such difficulties. The expertise and knowledge of rescue centre staff is a valuable resource that governments should, and often do, take advantage of, and that rescue centre operators are normally more than willing to supply. Save Vietnam’s Wildlife, for example, stated that “[m]ore than 1000 rangers and police were trained by SVW which included [training in] wildlife placement, law enforcement, control of wildlife trade and bush meat consumption, and improve[d] handling and research skills.”

⁶ Evidence is collected and presented as follows:

- On confiscation the animal is identified and registered, and a copy of the documentation is given to each participating authority involved.
- A notification is issued for presentation of the animals as evidence during an on-site inspection.
- When law enforcement and judicial authorities arrive at the ARCAS Rescue Center, the animal is already available so that legal procedures can be carried out at the ARCAS facilities.
- Once legal procedures are finished and the animal is deemed free from a requirement to be retained as evidence, CONAP legally and officially gives custody of the animal to ARCAS.
- The animal then joins the general population at the Rescue Center to undergo rehabilitation.

10.3. Some respondents reported, however, that their governments do not take sufficient advantage of opportunities for training, fail to include relevant officials (such as customs officers), or show no interest at all. In one case, a training course was suspended the morning it was due to start because government leaders objected to the presence of foreigners among the trainers; in another, the centre itself had to pay people to attend.

10.4. We believe that opportunities for training should be supported and increased. The following are examples of ongoing, successful programmes carried out by our respondents:

- ARCAS (Guatemala): “With the support of CAFTA/HSI, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and other donors, ARCAS conducts regular training for CONAP and other agencies and NGO workers in the capture and management of recently-confiscated animals, and we have provided capture equipment and kennels. We constantly train CONAP representatives and do sporadic training with police and park rangers regarding recognition of species, naming, registering, handling and acknowledgment of conservations status and emergencies. Results include: improved forms, animals in better health and adequate diets for transport or short term care, and quality of followup to each case once it reaches the rescue centre.”
- AAP Almere (Netherlands): Carries out training “on a periodical basis. Aspects of the training that we consider important are the ones involving the handling of the animals. We are currently discussing new collaborations possible with the authorities.”
- AAP Primadomus (Spain): “We do for customs, sanitation and Guardia Civil officers. Last year we did 5 courses. This year we are planning to do 10. They are focused in informing about the protocol of action and also about veterinary aspects and handling. Trainees are very interested in the handling part, so for next year I think it is important that we do a more practical course on the use of crates, gloves, and sedation”.
- Animals Asia (Vietnam): “We do not directly train officials to care for bears. However, if bear cubs are confiscated then we send our bear cub keeping guide and provide funds to implement the guide and ensure their survival & health. So far, this has worked well.”
- Antigua Exotic (Guatemala): Carries out training on species identification, safe handling, and first aid for government officers as well as paramedic staff, who get many calls from people bitten by venomous snakes.
- Natuurhulpcentrum (Belgium): “We often give animal handling courses to police/firefighters. During the training, we think it's important to know what to do before more trained animal handlers arrive (in case of dangerous animals).”
- Tikki Hywood Foundation (Zimbabwe): “We run annual workshops to train the necessary officials on all aspects of pangolin rescue, we

provide *in situ* advice and resources for each physical recovery on handling and management of the recovered animal(s)".

- Tranquility Rescue Center (Costa Rica): Offers training on handling and taking care of babies and/or injured animals.
- Save Vietnam's Wildlife (Vietnam): "[W]e provide training to custom officers, rangers and policemen. The training often focuses on conservation status, species ID, handling and care skills, placement options, wildlife farm issues, and illegal wildlife trade. We evaluate the trainees before and after the training and follow up with them after training."

11. Consultation, Public Policy and Outreach

11.1. Although the Convention refers to rescue centres simply as depositories for confiscated animals, governments should be encouraged to regard them much more widely as a source of expert assistance and policy advice. A properly-run, effective centre will be staffed with knowledgeable, experienced people committed to their work and eager to help their government with wildlife-related issues, and should be drawn on accordingly.

11.2. Most, but not all, of our respondents indicated that they were consulted in the majority of situations for which they could be of service. Some, however, felt that they were not consulted sufficiently, because government officials were not well informed of (or interested in) their existence or of the expertise they could offer, because lines of communication were poor or because of bureaucratic resistance. In some cases a lack of a government's political will to focus on wildlife crime or absence of financial and human resources were reasons given for insufficient consultation with rescue centres.

11.3. Rescue centres normally engage in public outreach, including public education and awareness programmes. We recommend that governments should look upon such programmes as an important part of the effort to reduce the need for confiscations by reducing demand (in consumer countries) and reducing poaching levels (in exporting countries), and should work actively with the centre in promoting them.

11.4. AAP, as an example, actively participates with the Netherlands government in creating a "Positive List" of mammals suitable to be kept as pets, as well as in promoting awareness about the threats facing Barbary macaques smuggled from Morocco through southern Europe, mainly Spain (and informing consumers about the inappropriateness of these animals as pets). In another example, Save Vietnam's Wildlife issued pictorial calendars for 2015 and 2016 with the tagline "Saving Owston's civet for our future before it's too late" that was distributed in 63 provinces in Vietnam. Animals Asia also works with Vietnam Traditional Medicine to promote herbal alternatives to bear bile so as to reduce bile demand and with local forest rangers in bear farming hotspots to monitor illegal trade.

12. Reporting Requirements

12.1. An important part of the work of rescue centres is (or should be) the maintenance of thorough records, in the form of files, logbooks or a computer database. Records are necessary to guide future care, to provide a history of dealings with government officials in cases of disagreement or dispute, and as evidence in criminal trials. Most (but not all) of our respondents reported that they were required to report to their governments on a regular basis.

12.2. Agreements between governments and rescue centres should set out the nature and frequency of the reports that the centre is required to provide to government officials. ARCAS (Guatemala), for example, is required to make monthly and yearly reports to CONAP on confiscated wildlife. Zoo Ave (Costa Rica) reports on a quarterly basis. Records kept by rescue centres generally include the circumstances under which the animal(s) were confiscated, the species and number confiscated, details of treatment after transfer to the centre (medical and nutritional care, etc.), and their eventual disposition (e.g. euthanasia, rehabilitation, release). Natuurhulpcentrum (Belgium) is not required to report this information to the Belgian government, but does so on a voluntary basis. At least one rescue centre commented that this presented something of a burden.

12.3. Governments should also be willing to provide details of animal confiscations to centres receiving them, as these details may contain information necessary for the animals' care and rehabilitation. When Animals Asia in China receives confiscated bears, the local authority provides a record that shows when the bear came under its management and details of the confiscation. In return, the centre is required "to submit a monthly report to government outlining how many bears we have and their health status...If a bear dies then we're required to submit a report within 7 days." Animals Asia in Vietnam also receives a copy of the government record on each rescued bear.

12.4. It is just as important to keep detailed records of animals that are refused. Often rescue centres cannot take the animal due to lack of resources (space, time, money) or expertise for the given species. These refused animals often 'disappear' and are not followed up for alternative placement, or added to the data for governments to consider. Governments should establish protocols on the treatment of refused animals.

12.5. At least one rescue centre recommended that a central database, similar to the CITES trade database, should be created to help evaluate the scale of confiscation and how animals are disposed of.

13. Funding Arrangements

13.1. Operating a rescue centre is an expensive proposition, and without financial support some rescue centres have had to cease operations. As a rescue centre may

have to maintain animals in its care for extended periods of time, or even permanently, it will inevitably require some degree of long-term financial stability.

13.2. A number of the organisations we consulted receive some funding from their governments. The Netherlands government, for example, pays all costs for confiscated animals sheltered by AAP Almere “until a proper final destination is found for the animals”. Guatemala provides 25-30% of the budget for the two rescue centres surveyed in that country.

13.3. Support may also be provided in kind rather than by direct funding. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, JACK receives no funding but is not required to pay either for the state-owned land where the centre is situated, or for water or electricity.

13.4. As rescue centres are carrying out their activities in order to assist Party governments in implementing the Convention, it is reasonable for them to expect some reimbursement for their expenses. We recommend that financial arrangements, as far as possible, should be included in MOUs or other written agreements between rescue centres and their governments, and that these arrangements should be reflected in the budgets of CITES implementing authorities. Parties should consider recouping some of these costs from offenders whenever possible.

14. General Recommendations

14.1. A suitable rescue centre should have:

- The physical facilities necessary to house the animals it rescues, based on both the types of animals the centre is expected to handle and volume of confiscations it is likely to receive. Factors to take into consideration include available space (including having enough space to separate different species and provide physical and visual separation of enclosures), suitable areas for food preparation and disposal of waste (organic and non-organic), and access to sources of food and other supplies.
- A staff of determined professionals, including adequately trained administrative and operational staff. There should be a minimum of one veterinarian on permanent staff if possible.
- Operational protocols should be drafted that are regularly updated and thoroughly followed.

14.2. Governments should be willing and able to:

- Establish and follow clear policies on dealing with confiscated animals. These should be based on building cooperative relationships, including sharing of information, with the rescue centres with which they work. If there are a number of rescue centres in the country, there should be an

efficient protocol (including, where necessary, procedures for rapid species identification) for determining which centre will be the appropriate recipient for each confiscation.

- Establish, in close consultation with the rescue centre, species- or taxon-specific protocols to govern how animals are transferred, including flexibility where necessary (e.g. decisions on whether animals need to be anesthetized or sedated for transport).
- Offer financial and tactical support to designated rescue centres to cover, as far as possible, expenditures in dealing with confiscated animals. This can include provision of suitable vehicles and containers for transfers, quarantine facilities, and funding for procedures such as genetic sampling (e.g. for forensic purposes).
- Take responsibility, in partnership with the rescue centre, for the animals they confiscate rather than simply leaving everything up to the rescue centre.
- Reduce, as much as possible, the time necessary to approve transfer of confiscated animals to the rescue centre, including simplifying procedures for obtaining approval from different government departments (e.g. wildlife, law enforcement) or levels of government.
- Work with the rescue centre on community outreach and demand reduction activities, especially in exporting countries where locals may be involved in wildlife trade.

Acknowledgements

This report was compiled with contributions from Iris Acosta, Lucy W. de Alió, Tuan Bendixsen, Aida Bustamante, Christelle Colin, Dave Eastham, Nicola Field, Raquel Garcia Hermida, Rachel Hogan, Lisa Hywood, Dennis Janik, Mark Jones, Jack Lubumbashi, Olga Martin, Roger Mazariegos, Alejandro Morales, Thai Nguyen, Heidi Quine, Jill Robinson, Frederik Thoelen, Gregg Tully, and Annemarie Weegenaar.

Annex A

Rescue Centres Consulted

AAP Almere (Netherlands)^{a, e}
AAP Primadomus (Spain)^{a, e}
Animals Asia (China)^{c, e}
Animals Asia (Vietnam)^{c, e}
Antigua Exotic (Guatemala)
Ape Action Africa (Cameroon)
Asociación Rescate y Conservación De Vida Silvestre (ARCAS) (Guatemala)^{c, e}
Asociación de Rescate de Fauna (ARFA) (Venezuela)^e
Chimpanzee Conservation Center (Guinea)^{b, d}
Jeunes Animaux Confisqués au Katanga (J.A.C.K.) (DRC)^{b, d}
Natuurhulpcentrum/Nature Help Centre (Belgium)^a
Save Vietnam's Wildlife (Vietnam)
Tikki Hywood Foundation (Zimbabwe)^e
Tranquility Rescue Center (Costa Rica)
Zoo Ave (Costa Rica)^c

a: European Alliance of Rescue Centres and Sanctuaries (EARS)

b: Member, Pan-African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA)

c: Accredited Facility, Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS)

d: Verified Facility, GFAS

e: Member of SSN

Annex B

Rescue Center Survey

1. Have you or any of your associates been designated as a rescue centre by any CITES Party?
2. If so, how was this arrangement negotiated?
3. Please list the animal species housed and cared for at your facility? Do you believe that rescue centres should be taxon-specific (e.g. primates-only, birds-only etc.)?
4. Do you receive any support from the Party government for your rescue centre activities?
5. How close is your centre to confiscation points (e.g. ports of entry) in your country? Is distance a factor in how effectively you can operate? Why or why not?
6. Do you have staff specifically tasked to work with government officers?
7. How would you describe your working relationship with the government, including with customs and law enforcement officers? Is the interaction positive, negative, neutral? Please provide details.
8. Do you feel that you are consulted in the majority of situations in which your services would be appropriate, and if not why not?
9. Are you satisfied with the arrangements that exist for transfer of confiscated animals to your centre? If yes, please explain. If not, why not and what changes would you recommend?
10. What would you consider to be the best and most effective means of ensuring that this transfer is handled with minimum harm to either animals or people?
11. Do you collect any of the following information?
 - Circumstances under which the animal was seized or confiscated.
 - The species and number of seized or confiscated animals.
 - How the animals were treated (treatment of injuries, nutrition care, etc.).
 - What happened to the animal(s) in question (euthanasia, rehabilitation, release, etc.).
12. Does the government of the country where you are located require you to report any of the above-listed information? (For example whether the animals received treatment/were euthanized/were rehabilitated/were released back into the wild, etc.)
13. How do you integrate your activities with government quarantine requirements? Do you provide quarantine facilities, and if so is this an appropriate thing for a rescue centre to do?
14. If you could make any changes to your current arrangement that you feel would improve your ability to act as an effective rescue centre, what would these be?
15. Are you involved in training activities with customs officers or others who might be required to handle confiscated animals? If yes, please describe. If yes, how would you assess the results, and what aspects of training would you consider to be the most important?

16. Are you involved in any way with law enforcement activities relating to confiscated animals, including cooperation with investigators, appearances in court etc.? If so, how does this happen (if possible please explain your involvement from point of confiscation, to court proceedings, to final ruling in the court case, etc.). If necessary, how would you like to see your involvement expanded or improved?

17. Under what circumstances can animals be removed from the centre, and are you satisfied with the way this is done? (e.g. wildlife releases, death, transferred to zoological institutions or private collections, or, returned to owner). Does such removal require approval from the government authority? Should it?

18. Are you free to make decisions as to the treatment of confiscated animals in your care, including decisions regarding euthanasia if necessary? If not, what procedures do you have to follow, and do you have any recommendations to make with respect to such procedures?

19. In general, if you were to make recommendations to countries lacking appropriate rescue centres that wished to establish them, what, based on your experience, with these recommendations be?

20. If you do not operate as a rescue centre, have you ever offered to provide these services to any Party, and if so, why were these offers not taken up?

21. If you do not feel that your sanctuary would be appropriate as a rescue centre, what are the reasons for this (including location, facilities etc.)?

22. If other rescue centres exist in your country, do you feel that these operate effectively, and if not why not?

23. In addition to the above, do you have any additional advice or lessons learned that you would like to provide to CITES Parties seeking to establish or improve rescue centres?