

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



Nineteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Panama City (Panama), 14 – 25 November 2022

Interpretation and implementation matters

Regulation of trade

DEFINITION OF THE TERM 'APPROPRIATE AND ACCEPTABLE DESTINATIONS'

1. This document has been submitted by the Standing Committee.\*

Background

2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.152 to 18.156 on *Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations'*, as follows:

***Directed to the Secretariat***

**18.152** *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *create and maintain a dedicated webpage on the CITES website to make available the non-binding guidance contained in document CoP18 Doc. 44.1 and to compile reference materials, published references, best practice examples, examples of Parties' appropriate and acceptable destination findings and suitably equipped to house and care for living specimens' findings, and other relevant information;*
- b) *issue a notification within 90 days of the close of the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties containing the non-binding guidance contained in document CoP18 Doc. 44.1 on the provisions of paragraph 2 a) of Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18) on Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations' for living specimens of Appendix-II species subject to an annotation referring to 'appropriate and acceptable destinations', as well as Article III paragraphs 3 (b) and 5 (b) for living Appendix-I specimens; and inviting Parties to submit relevant material for the CITES webpage created under paragraph a);*
- c) *source additional relevant information for inclusion on the dedicated webpage created under paragraph a); and*
- d) *issue a notification within 30 days of the close of the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee inviting Parties to provide feedback on experience with using the guidance contained in document CoP18 Doc. 44.1 as well as the information provided on the CITES webpage created under paragraph a) and report this to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee for their consideration and recommendations, as appropriate.*

- 18.153** *The Secretariat shall consult with Parties whose elephants are listed in Appendix II and who have exported wild caught elephants to a non-elephant range State since CoP11 on their implementation*

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\* *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.*

of Resolution Conf. 11.20 on Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations', in particular considering the role and responsibility of the State of export in Article IV and Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on Non-detriment findings, and provide the information received to the Animals Committee, for its consideration.

#### **Directed to Parties**

**18.154** Parties are:

- a) invited to use the non-binding guidance contained in document CoP18 Doc. 44.1 when considering whether the proposed recipient of a living specimen is suitably equipped to house and care for it; and
- b) encouraged to submit relevant information for the webpage created under Decision 18.152, paragraph a).

#### **Directed to the Animals Committee**

**18.155** The Animals Committee shall:

- a) prepare non-binding best practice guidance on how to determine whether “the trade would promote *in situ* conservation”, in line with the provisions of paragraph 2 b) of Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18), in consultation with the Secretariat;
- b) building on the existing non-binding guidance contained in document CoP18 Doc. 44.1, prepare more detailed species-specific guidance for living specimens of African elephants and southern white rhinoceros, in consultation with relevant experts (including species and zoological facility experts) and the Secretariat;
- c) make the guidance and any recommendations available for consideration and endorsement by the Standing Committee; and
- d) review the report from the Secretariat on feedback from Parties called for in Decision 18.152 paragraph d) and make recommendations, as appropriate, for consideration by the Standing Committee.

#### **Directed to the Standing Committee**

**18.156** The Standing Committee shall:

- a) consider the report of the Animals Committee, regarding the non-binding guidance developed under Decision 18.155 paragraphs a) and b), and the guidance contained in document CoP18 Doc. 44.1 and make recommendations, as appropriate, including possible revisions to Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18) and any other relevant Resolution, for consideration at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and
- b) review the report from the Secretariat and any comments and recommendations coming from the Animals Committee on feedback from Parties called for in Decision 18.152 paragraph d) and make recommendations, as appropriate, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.

3. The Animals Committee reported to the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC74, Lyon, March 2022) on the implementation of the Decisions (see document [SC74 Doc. 50](#)). The report included information provided to the Committee by the Secretariat.

#### **Implementation of Decision 18.152 and 18.154**

4. Concerning paragraphs a) to c) of Decision 18.152, and with reference to Decision 18.154, the Secretariat has created a dedicated webpage on the CITES website on *Appropriate and acceptable destinations*. This webpage contains the “non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen is suitably equipped to house and care for it”, contained in document CoP18 Doc. 44.1, and a range of reference materials, published references, best practice examples, examples of Parties' appropriate

and acceptable destination findings and 'suitably equipped to house and care for living specimens' findings, and other relevant information, as supplied by Parties and organizations in response to [Notification to the Parties No. 2019/070](#). Parties and relevant organizations are invited to continue submitting additional materials to the Secretariat for inclusion on this webpage.

- Concerning paragraph d) of Decision 18.152, it was envisaged that the Secretariat would issue a Notification within 30 days after the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee inviting Parties to provide feedback on experiences with the guidance in document CoP18 Doc. 44.1 and to report back on responses to the Standing Committee and the Animals Committee for their consideration and recommendations, as appropriate. However, the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee (SC73) took place online in May 2021 and there was not sufficient time following this meeting to issue the notification and receive feedback in time before the 31st meeting of the Animals Committee (AC31, online, June 2021). It is also unclear how much experience Parties may have acquired with the guidance in view of the impact that COVID-19 restrictions had on international trade transactions. In light of the above, the Secretariat did not report to AC31 on its implementation of Decision 18.152, paragraph d). Since the next regular meeting of the Animals Committee is to take place after CoP19, the Animals Committee agreed at AC31 to propose revised Decisions directed to the Secretariat, and the Animals and Standing Committee, which are contained in Annex 1 to the present document.

#### Implementation of Decision 18.153

- Pursuant to Decision 18.153, on 17 April 2020, the Secretariat wrote to Parties with African elephant populations included in Appendix II who have exported wild caught African elephants to a non-African elephant range State since CoP11, and requested these Parties to submit information to the Secretariat on their implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.20, in particular considering the role and responsibility of the State of export in Article IV of the Convention and Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings*. Responses were received from Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. No response was received from Botswana.
- Namibia confirmed that Resolution Conf. 11.20 had not been considered because all exports of live African elephants from Namibia to non-range States were undertaken under the provisions of Article III and not Article IV. Namibia further stated in its response that there have been "no exports of live wild-caught elephants to non-elephant range States other than those which took place between 2000 and 2018". Namibia stated that "Resolution Conf. 16.7 was also taken into consideration during these transactions whereby assessments were conducted prior to the exports, to ensure that export does not pose any detrimental effect to the survival of the species in the wild".
- South Africa responded that it has norms and standards for the management of elephants that restrict African elephant exports to range States only and for conservation purposes.
- Zimbabwe recalled that it had "entered a reservation with respect to the update of the references to the Resolutions mentioned in Annotation 2 relating to the populations of its African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)", and further "reserved its right not to be bound by Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18) on *Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations'*". Zimbabwe reported that prior to entering this reservation, the export of live African elephants to China started in 2012, and subsequent exports occurred in 2015, 2016, 2018 and 2019. In total, 115 African elephants had been exported to China since 2012. All African elephants had been captured in Hwange National Park. Zimbabwe stated that "the purpose of the exports was to generate revenue for conservation without any detriment to the source population where the range area is experiencing carrying capacity issues". Zimbabwe provided details of the procedures followed when exporting live African elephants. The detailed response from Zimbabwe, which includes a copy of its non-detriment finding, is presented in the language and format in which it was received in Annex 3 to document [AC31 Doc. 18.1](#).
- At AC31, the Animals Committee agreed to refer the following concerns to the Standing Committee for its advice and recommendations, as appropriate: a) Namibia's interpretation of its exports of live African elephants to non-range States outlined in paragraph 7 of document [AC31 Doc. 18.1, Addendum 1](#); and b) Zimbabwe's reservation submitted following the changes adopted at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18) on *Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations'* and the export of live elephants occurring in 2019 as outlined in paragraph 9 of document AC31 Doc. 18.1, Addendum 1, while noting discrepancies between document AC31 Doc. 18.2 and the response provided by Zimbabwe in Annex 3 to document AC31 Doc. 18.1.

#### Implementation of Decision 18.155

11. Following the postponement due to the COVID-19 pandemic of the 31st meeting of the Animals Committee meeting, scheduled to take place from 13-17 July 2020, the Committee took a number of intersessional decisions (see [Notification No. 2020/057](#) of 22 September 2020), including the establishment of an intersessional working group on the definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations', with the following mandate: a) prepare draft non-binding best practice guidance on how to determine whether "the trade would promote in situ conservation", in line with the provisions of paragraph 2 b) of Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18), in consultation with the Secretariat; b) building on the existing non-binding guidance contained in document CoP18 Doc. 44.1, prepare more detailed species-specific guidance for living specimens of African elephants and southern white rhinoceros, in consultation with relevant experts (including species and zoological facility experts) and the Secretariat; and c) report on the outcomes of their work at the next meeting of the Animals Committee.
12. At AC31, the Animals Committee continued to work on 'Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations', through the establishment an in-session working group with the following mandate: a) concerning Decision 18.153, consider the scientific aspects of the responses in paragraphs 7 to 9 of addendum 1, document AC31 Doc. 18.2 and Annex 3 to document AC31 Doc. 18.1, and draft recommendations for the Animals Committee's consideration as appropriate; and b) concerning Decision 18.155, review Annexes 1 and 2 to addendum 2 to document AC31 Doc. 18.1 and any updates provided to the meeting by the co-chairs of the working group, and draft recommendations as appropriate for the Animals Committee's consideration.
13. Based on the outcome of the in-session working group, the Animals Committee agreed to submit the *Non-binding best practice guidance on how to determine whether "the trade would promote in situ conservation"*, presented in Annex 1 to [Addendum 2](#) to document AC31 Doc. 18.1, for further consideration and endorsement by the Standing Committee.
14. AC31 furthermore agreed to submit the *Non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen of African elephant and/or southern white rhinoceros is suitably equipped to house and care for it*, as presented in Annex 2 to [Addendum 2](#) to document AC31 Doc. 18.1, for further discussion and, if appropriate, modification and onward submission to the CoP19 by the Standing Committee.

#### Implementation of Decision 18.156

15. The report from the Animals Committee in compliance with Decision 18.155, paragraph c) can be found in document SC74 Doc. 50 and was considered by the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting (Lyon, March 2022), in accordance with Decision 18.156, paragraph a).
16. The Committee agreed to submit to CoP19 the *Non-binding best practice guidance on how to determine whether "the trade would promote in situ conservation"*, as presented in Annex 1 to the present document.
17. The Committee agreed to submit to CoP19 the *Non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen of African elephant and/or southern white rhinoceros is suitably equipped to house and care for it*, as presented in Annex 2 to the current document.
18. Concerning possible revisions to Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18) and any other relevant Resolution, the Committee agreed that it was premature to do so at this stage.
19. The Committee noted the concerns raised about the export of live African elephants by Namibia and Zimbabwe and invited Parties to propose to the Conference of the Parties a clear legal framework for trade in live African elephants.
20. Concerning paragraph b), the Standing Committee was unable to fulfil this part of its mandate as Decision 18.152, paragraph d) was not implemented by the Animals Committee for the reasons outlined in paragraph 5 above. The Standing Committee agreed to propose new decisions to replace Decision 18.152 – 18.165, as suggested by the Animals Committee. The draft decisions are contained in Annex 3 to the present document.

#### Recommendations

21. The Conference of the Parties is invited to:

- a) approve the *Non-binding best practice guidance on how to determine whether “the trade would promote in situ conservation”* contained in Annex 1 to the present document;
- b) approve the *Non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen of African elephant and/or southern white rhinoceros is suitably equipped to house and care for it*, contained in Annex 2; and
- c) adopt the draft decisions presented in Annex 3; and
- d) delete Decisions 18.152 to 18.156;

#### COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat recommends that the Conference of the Parties adopt the non-binding guidance for determining whether the trade would promote *in situ* conservation, presented in Annex 1 to the document.
- B. The Secretariat also recommends that the Conference of the Parties adopt the non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen of African elephant and/or southern white rhinoceros is suitably equipped to house and care for it, presented in Annex 2 to the document.
- C. The Secretariat proposes that the non-binding guidance documents presented in Annexes 1 and 2 be made available to the Parties on the CITES webpage “Appropriate and acceptable destinations”.
- D. The Secretariat recommends that the Conference of the Parties adopt the draft decisions on the definition of “appropriate and acceptable destinations” presented in Annex 3 to the document, with some suggested amendments. The Secretariat proposes including a reference to the non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen of African elephant and/or southern white rhinoceros is suitably equipped to house and care for it, presented in Annex 2 to the document, should it be approved by the CoP. The Secretariat also proposes the deletion of “within 90 days of the close of the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties” as the decisions adopted at CoP19 will only come into force 90 days after the meeting. The Secretariat proposes to issue a Notification requesting Parties to share their experiences of using the available non-binding guidance documents and report to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee any responses that may give rise to the need for amendments to the guidance. The proposed amended decision 19.AA would read as follows:

#### **19.AA Directed to the Secretariat**

The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a Notification ~~within 90 days of the close of the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties~~, inviting feedback on experience with using the guidance contained in Notification to the Parties No. 2019/070 on *Non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen is suitably equipped to house and care for it and the Non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen of African elephant and/or southern white rhinoceros is suitably equipped to house and care for it*, as well as the information provided on the CITES webpage “Appropriate and acceptable destinations”; and
- b) ~~draw the attention of report on this feedback to the Animals Committee and the Standing Committee to any responses that may give rise to the need for amendments to the guidance for their consideration and recommendations, as appropriate.~~

#### **19.BB Directed to the Animals Committee**

The Animals Committee shall review ~~the~~ any report from the Secretariat on feedback from Parties called for in Decision 19.AA and make recommendations, as appropriate, for consideration by the Standing Committee.

#### **19.CC Directed to the Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee shall review ~~the~~ any report from the Secretariat and any comments and recommendations coming from the Animals Committee on feedback from Parties called for in Decision 19.AA and make recommendations, as appropriate, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting

- E. The Secretariat recommends the deletion of Decisions 18.152 to 18.156 as they have been completed or replaced by the draft decisions in paragraph D above.
- F. The Secretariat would like to draw Parties' attention to the fact that the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting (SC74, Lyon, March 2022) invited Parties to make proposals to clarify the legal framework for trade in live African elephants (see document SC74 Sum 07). This matter will be discussed at the present meeting under agenda item 66.4.2. The Secretariat notes the relevance of the non-binding guidance proposed for adoption in the present document to such a framework.
- G. The Secretariat would also like to highlight that the issue of including references to Resolutions in the annotations may benefit from further discussion under agenda item 88 on communications concerning amendments to the Appendices received by the Depositary Government after CoP18.

## NON-BINDING BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE ON HOW TO DETERMINE WHETHER “THE TRADE WOULD PROMOTE *IN SITU* CONSERVATION”

This guidance contains the points, that a Scientific Authority and Management Authority (SA and MA) of the State of import may consider when assessing the trade of specimens of an Appendix II population for which an annotation requests that the State of import assess whether the trade would promote *in situ* conservation.

- The SA and MA should consider using the list of possible benefits for *in situ* conservation, set out below as a benchmark based on which an assessment of benefits of a particular transfer can be carried out.
- The SA and MA of an importing country may want to obtain full details of the conservation actions being proposed as part of, or as a result of, any proposed trade, and use the list below for comparison and cross-checking to if the proposed actions are aligned with the provided guidance on actions that promote *in situ* conservation.
- The SA and MA of the importing country could seek the support, views and advice of the SA and MA exporting country where appropriate, particularly in relation to verification of the conservation activities proposed.
- Regarding the relative value of each of the possible benefits in terms of their contribution towards *in situ* conservation, the list below provides a wide range of ways trade may contribute towards *in situ* conservation, and as such, there is a question over how impactful the possible benefits would be and how the relative weights of impact may be assessed towards a sufficient contribution.
- This determination is one which is left to the discretion of the SA and MA of the State of import for assessment on a case-by-case basis, based on the information provided and the species concerned. In some instances, the financing of material/equipment, infrastructure and investment in technologies that aim at protecting wildlife habitats may be the most appropriate contribution if the species concerned is most threatened by poaching or collection for local consumption. For other species, the expansion, restoration or creation of habitats securing and improving the quality and carrying capacity of habitats so that viable populations can be maintained may be the most appropriate form of *in situ* conservation support if the species is mainly threatened by habitat loss or deterioration.
- Some options may need to be combined with other options to result in a substantial net conservation contribution for the species in the wild.

### **Possible forms of benefits for *in situ* conservation**

It should be emphasized that any of the benefits should have the aim of securing long-term populations of species in natural ecosystems and habitats. The proceeds of export of wildlife can be used to directly finance a variety of activities that may benefit *in situ* conservation of CITES species in the wild and the ecosystems on which they depend. These include but are not limited to:

- financing of material/equipment, infrastructure and investment in technologies that aim at protecting wildlife areas (parks, conservation areas and established habitats) and the protected species living therein.
- recruitment of personnel to enhance the management and protection of species within their natural range
- provision of capacity building and support for field staff/managers, *in situ* conservation personnel, community members and local stakeholders to
  - successfully protect threatened species from poaching
  - improve the technical capacity to analyze and report on spatially explicit data in a timely manner
  - use satellite tracking collars, software, GPS devices to protect wildlife

- use science-based management practices of species or populations,
- expansion, restoration or creation of habitats securing and improving the quality and carrying capacity of habitats so that viable populations can be maintained
- development and carrying out of community awareness, education and conservation programs for indigenous and local communities in order to
  - improve coexistence with wildlife
  - develop incentive schemes for conserving threatened species to reduce harvest where it is biologically unsustainable
  - provide assistance with alternative livelihoods
  - development of community benefits for people living with wildlife
  - develop humane deterrents to keep target species away from areas of human habitations and reduce human-wildlife conflict
  - implement humane measures to protect crops
  - to reduce and/or eliminate illegal exploitation of natural resources
  - to enhance environmental attitudes, values, and knowledge
  - to build skills that prepare individuals and communities to collaboratively undertake positive environmental action.
- conducting research to improve ways in which humans and wildlife can coexist
- establishment of rescue, rehabilitation, reintroduction, release and post-release monitoring programs that prioritize endangered or threatened species
- conducting research on threatened species, including but not limited to ecology, population monitoring, wildlife health, establishment of monitoring and adaptive management plans
- development and support of control protocols that oversee the implementation and monitoring activities in relation to the protection and biologically sustainable use of threatened species

Non-monetary contributions can also have direct and indirect benefits for *in situ* conservation. These include but are not limited to:

- research from *ex situ* locations intended to support scientific work relating to *in situ* conservation and /or directly contribute to the conservation of species or ecosystems:
  - monitoring methods, life history information, nutritional requirements, disease transmission/treatments
  - Genetic and demographic modelling – assess the relative importance of different threats to the different populations
  - animal physiology,
  - ecological and behavioral studies
  - husbandry/recognized captive breeding programs (such as the SSP of AZA, the EEP of EAZA or the GSMPs of WAZA) that support conservation of the threatened species in the wild in the return of rescue animals to the wild, and/or release and reintroduction purposes
  - veterinary health
  - demand reduction research for rhino and elephant products which threaten wild populations
- development of knowledge that allows for the carrying out of community awareness, education and conservation programs mentioned above
- exchange of specimens from recognized breeding programs (such as the SSP of AZA, the EEP of EAZA or the GSMPs of WAZA ) for reintroduction into the wild, applying the IUCN guidelines for reintroductions
- holding workshops, conferences, symposia or other meetings intended to share and expand knowledge for the conservation of the species *in situ* and build capacity *in situ*.

Below you find a list of references to important guidelines and examples of best practices in relation to our mandate.



## Guidelines:

IUCN have guidelines for reintroductions and other wildlife translocations <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2013-009.pdf>

IUCN Species Survival Commission Guidelines on the Use of *Ex situ* Management for Species Conservation: <https://www.eaza.net/assets/Uploads/Position-statements/IUCN-Guidelines-on-the-Use-of-ex-situ-management-for-species.pdf>

IUCN Guidelines (2017) IUCN Guidelines for Determining When and How *Ex Situ* Management Should Be Used in Species Conservation <https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/conl.12285>

One Plan Approach from IUCN: [The One Plan Approach to Conservation | Conservation Planning Specialist Group \(cpsg.org\)](https://www.cpsg.org/)

## Examples/ best practice:

### *North Carolina Zoo:*

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Larry\\_Minter/publication/332273276\\_The\\_African\\_elephant\\_Loxodonta\\_spp\\_conservation\\_programmes\\_of\\_North\\_Carolina\\_Zoo\\_two\\_decades\\_of\\_using\\_emerging\\_technologies\\_to\\_advance\\_in\\_situ\\_conservation\\_efforts/links/5d3322b74585153e59110155/The-African-elephant-Loxodonta-spp-conservation-programmes-of-North-Carolina-Zoo-two-decades-of-using-emerging-technologies-to-advance-in-situ-conservation-efforts.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Larry_Minter/publication/332273276_The_African_elephant_Loxodonta_spp_conservation_programmes_of_North_Carolina_Zoo_two_decades_of_using_emerging_technologies_to_advance_in_situ_conservation_efforts/links/5d3322b74585153e59110155/The-African-elephant-Loxodonta-spp-conservation-programmes-of-North-Carolina-Zoo-two-decades-of-using-emerging-technologies-to-advance-in-situ-conservation-efforts.pdf)

Colchester Zoo Project: Elephant Orphanage Project (EOP), South Kafue National Park, Zambia - <https://www.actionforthewild.org/projects/current-projects/projects-in-africa/elephant-orphanage-project-eop/>

### *Zoological Society of London – London and Whipsnade*

<https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/asia/asian-elephant-and-tiger-conservation-in-thailand>

Bechert, U.S., Brown, J.L., Dierenfeld, E.S., Ling, P.D., Molter, C.M. and Schulte, B.A. (2019), Zoo elephant research: contributions to conservation of captive and free-ranging species. *Int. Zoo Yb.*, 53: 89-115. <https://doi.org/10.1111/izy.12211>

The Thermal imaging elephant work at ZSL, zoo elephant contributing to wild counterparts: [HEAT-seeking | Zoological Society of London \(ZSL\)](https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/asia/asian-elephant-and-tiger-conservation-in-thailand)

*The Aspinall Foundation* [https://www.aspinallfoundation.org/the-aspinall-foundation/working-around-the-world/?\\_ga=2.215169107.575971721.1613136783-1464609486.1613136783](https://www.aspinallfoundation.org/the-aspinall-foundation/working-around-the-world/?_ga=2.215169107.575971721.1613136783-1464609486.1613136783)

Prigen Conservation Breeding Ark <https://prigenark.com>

## NON-BINDING GUIDANCE FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A PROPOSED RECIPIENT OF A LIVING SPECIMEN OF AFRICAN ELEPHANT AND/OR SOUTHERN WHITE RHINOCEROS IS SUITABLY EQUIPPED TO HOUSE AND CARE FOR IT

This non-binding guidance has been developed on the basis of the mandate given to the Animals Committee through Decision 18.155 b).

Assessment of whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen of African elephant and/or southern white rhinoceros is suitably equipped to house and care for them should focus on factors related to physical housing, diet, animal care and husbandry, animal well-being, security, long-term sustainability of maintaining the facility and the care of the animals, and breeding<sup>1</sup>, as outlined in Section A.

The list of factors in Section A is indicative and can be further developed to reflect local situations.

While not compromising the overall objective of keeping animals in appropriate environment and ensuring their well-being, the values set up for different factors in Section A need to take into consideration the specific situation of each facility, and they need to be considered in their totality. While some factors are mutually interlinked and their values may be interdependent, each factor needs to be evaluated and satisfied in making the determination of suitably equipped to house and care for specimens in captivity. There needs to be care taken not to compromise on a factor due to mutual interlinking, and each individual factor needs to be set up at a level not to cause physical or social suffering to an animal.

All facilities should have a written and regularly reviewed management plan, which should include standards to determine how each of these factors will be implemented by the facility for the lifespan of the animals. This document should build on one or combination of existing best practice guidelines, as outlined in Section B.

While some minimum standards of husbandry are defined by Parties and represent the minimum requirements that each facility is obliged to meet to avoid mistreatment of animals, these non-binding best practice guidelines should not be understood as minimum requirements; they provide guidance for development and further improvements of facilities keeping African elephants and southern white rhinoceros in captivity.

### **Section A - Factors to be evaluated when considering whether the proposed recipient of a living specimen of African elephant or southern white rhinoceros is suitably equipped to house and care for it**

#### **1. Physical housing (indoor and outdoor)**

**All elements of physical housing (enclosures, doors, barriers, substrates, etc.) are designed and maintained to ensure safety for animals and humans. Elephants have sufficient space to make environmental and social choices, to move about and lie down without restriction in inside enclosures, and to walk appropriate distances on a daily basis in outside enclosures to maintain a healthy body condition, while engaging in natural behaviours such as foraging, feeding, exploring, socializing.**

##### a) Construction

- i. professional design of the facility with an emphasis on the needs of the specific animal species to be housed
- ii. safety considerations of all construction elements and substrates (including sloped entries, non-slip surfaces, door construction, etc.)
- iii. size of the enclosure corresponds to the group composition and dynamics, as well as to climatic conditions
  - indoor - adequate space for each animal to lie down and move around with free access to the outdoor areas day and night, in the absence of adverse weather, safety or health conditions
  - outdoor - sufficient space and environmental complexity to both allow for and stimulate natural behavioural activities and social interactions

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<sup>1</sup> While breeding is not a prerequisite to a facility being suitably equipped to house and care for a specimen, it is important to consider protocols established relating to breeding if breeding or not

- interplay between the size of the enclosure and its structural, vertical, and horizontal complexity and furnishing
  - iv. construction materials suitable for use with elephants and/or rhinoceros, no sharp ends, objects or potentially dangerous components
  - v. containment barriers - appropriate choice of materials and design, avoiding dry moats with steep slopes
  - vi. substrate - safe and appropriate due to health implications and its role in enrichment and comfort
  - vii. drainage to remove excess water
  - viii. appropriate and safe plantings
  - ix. Housing design includes structural and other precautions to mitigate against natural disasters such as flooding, hurricanes/typhoons, tornados/cyclones, earthquakes, wildfires, extreme temperatures/drought, etc., which can be reasonably anticipated in a given location
  - x. shelter from adverse weather (sun/rain/wind)
  - xi. enclosure furnishing
    - diversity of zones to display species-specific behaviour
    - pools (not necessary for southern white rhinoceros)
    - shade
    - sand bath or wallow (can be mud wallows)
    - scratching posts
    - resting areas
    - other physical enrichment (water features, other varying topography, multiple feeding stations, long term feeding options)
  - xii. physical arrangement for management of social groups, possibility to hide from the view of other animals and visitors, escape routes to permit animals to safely remove themselves from incidents of aggression by a conspecific
  - xiii. space to expand as the animal / herd grows / develops
  - xiv. areas adapted for bulls to separate them from females and calves if needed, in particular during oestrus / musth periods, while providing the same standard of housing to bulls (e.g. appropriate size, complexity, substrate and furnishing of enclosures, shelter, visual barriers and safety)
  - xv. physical arrangements for isolation / quarantine, avoiding compromising welfare if isolation is prolonged
  - xvi. enclosure construction designed to accommodate management under protected contact, and availability of area for training in positive Protected Contact<sup>2</sup> handling of elephants
  - xvii. if breeding, space/arrangements for newborn animals
  - xviii. if animal is on public display, availability of an off-display area with permanent access
  - xix. cameras for security and for monitoring animals (pregnant females, elderly individuals, social tensions in a group, etc.)
- b) climate conditions, with specific consideration of the local weather conditions
- i. temperature
    - zones with appropriate temperature
    - heating / cooling, for example heavy plastic or rubber curtains for entry doors, as appropriate
    - monitoring / limiting time spent outdoors in cold weather
  - ii. light
    - as much natural light as possible, including indoor
    - quality artificial lightning indoor, gradual switch on/off
  - ii. air quality (limiting dust, appropriate ventilation, measures to prevent transmission of airborne diseases)

## 2. Dietary needs

**A properly balanced and healthy diet is provided in a stimulating way, based on the needs of each animal. Fresh clean water is available in sufficient quantity and at all times.**

- a) Nutrition
  - i. basic diet designed and regularly reviewed by appropriate staff (veterinarian or nutritionist)
  - ii. appropriate quantity of food and energy consumption

<sup>2</sup> *Protected Contact is a style of elephant management where all contact with the animal is performed through a protective barrier. Protected contact training is achieved through positive reinforcement techniques using targets, food rewards, body positioning and the voluntary participation by the elephant. Protected contact also includes situations where the elephant is handled through a protective barrier but is also spatially confined by an Elephant Restraint Device (ERD). Similar approach based on Positive Reinforcement Training is also used to perform the necessary procedures on rhinos. See EAZA, GFAS and other standards for more details.*

- iii. vitamins and minerals
- iv. special dietary requirements (pregnancy, lactation, age, etc.)
- v. appropriate storage conditions, quality and hygiene of food
- vi. variety of food and feeding methods
- vii. respecting feeding pattern (in time)
- viii. provision of hay with low nutritional quality at all times and browse (for elephants)
- ix. ensuring access of all individuals to food
- x. avoiding obesity (in particular for elephants) – monitoring body condition scores

b) potable water available at sufficient quality, quantity, and at all times

### 3. Animal care and husbandry

**All aspects of husbandry, including veterinary care, environmental enrichment and diet are designed to optimize the animal's well-being. All animals are routinely monitored as frequently as needed. Animals are not fearful or aggressive in response to human presence or routine care procedures, and necessary handling and restraint is done safely and appropriately, with minimal distress to animals. Staff are trained in species-specific safe handling techniques/practices.**

a) general care

- i. sufficient numbers, training and expertise of staff who care for the animals
- ii. general handling
  - daily checks of each individual
  - periodic health checks (body condition scores / weight, nutritional status), in appropriate frequencies for each individual depending on its age, health condition, etc.
  - regular cleaning of enclosures from manure and left-over food, cleaning / regular maintenance of pools (to avoid contamination and spreading of water-borne diseases)
  - protocol for safe handling (Protected Contact)
  - where possible and appropriate, Protected Contact is used to carry out the necessary procedures and checks of animals; other types of restraint should be limited to the shortest time possible in order to reduce stress
  - overnight visual monitoring techniques (including those capable of recording in low light/night conditions), such as CCTV monitoring to record social relationships and behavioural patterns, with regular review of footage
- iii. safe disposal of faeces and urine in a manner that eliminates pollution and avoids spreading of pathogens
- iv. feasibility of long-term care (for the lifespan of the animal)
- v. regular review of procedures to ensure continued level of care

b) veterinary care

- i. qualified veterinarian care
- ii. regular veterinary care for each animal
- iii. care at birth and death
- iv. preventive medicine
  - regular check-ups
  - vaccination
  - parasite control
  - regular tests to monitor overall health, including blood tests, trunk wash, eye swabs and saliva tests, as appropriate
  - regular testing of elephant calves to identify and subsequently treat active EEHV (elephant endotheliotropic herpesvirus) infections
  - dental and horn care
  - foot care
- v. disease and injury care
- vi. postmortem examination of dead animals
- vii. availability of veterinary medicinal products

c) arrangements for quarantine and isolation

d) transportation

- i. availability of a plan for safe transportation
  - ii. respect guidelines for safe transportation (IATA, CITES, IUCN)
  - iii. close cooperation between sender and receiver of an animal, including on-site visits, in order to provide a better common understanding and better outcomes for housing and care
- e) safety and security measures
- safety of animals
    - a) preventing injury
    - b) preventing escape
    - c) regular inspections and maintenance of physical environment and enclosures, including their furnishing
    - d) security to prevent theft and death of specimens
  - safety of staff
  - safety of visitors
  - emergency management plan in the event of a disaster, such as flooding, hurricanes/typhoons, tornados/cyclones, earthquakes, wildfires, extreme temperatures/drought, etc., which can be reasonably anticipated in a given location
  - plan for secure and legal maintenance, disposal, or destruction of specimens after death, in particular to prevent entering of dead body parts into illegal commercial trade

#### 4. Animal well-being

**Animals are kept in appropriate social groups. They are provided with a complex physical and social environment which stimulates natural behaviours, social interactions and activity. Food is prepared and presented in a safe and appropriate manner to meet health and social needs. The behavioural/psychological well-being of each animal is evaluated and addressed.**

- a) appropriate group size and composition
  - i. social structure
  - ii. ability to separate the group and individuals within the group when needed
  - iii. methods of integration / introduction of new animals into the social structure and for changing group structure
- b) possibility to hide from the view of other members of the herd/group, to exercise normal defence reactions and to keep appropriate flight or escape distances
- c) proximity of other species / sharing enclosure with other species (consider safe zones and escape routes for other species as elephants and rhinoceros may be dominant)
- d) animal behaviour
  - i. behavioural enrichment plan
    - diverse nutrition
    - food to stimulate natural grazing conditions, food-based enrichment
    - materials to play
    - materials to scratch (trunks of trees, rocks)
    - enrichment frequency, training programs, etc.
- e) exposure to visitors
  - i. appropriate distance from visitors, including access to off-display areas
  - ii. no touching / riding by visitors of African elephants and southern white rhinoceros
  - iii. privacy from visitors (partial visual and sound dampening barriers)
  - iv. measures to prevent visitors from discarding objects into enclosure (intentionally or unintentionally)

#### 5. Record keeping

**Written policy exists and is followed to maintain complete medical records and appropriate statistics for each individual animal.**

- a) all animals have permanent identification
- b) maintain for each individual, from being acquired / born to the death, and until certain period after the animal's death, or its transfer from the facility, records of:

- i. source, date of acquisition, evidence of legal acquisition, parentage (if known), means of transport to the current facility, health records prior to acquisition (if available), relevant permits etc.
  - ii. preventive care and veterinary treatment, including weights and/or body condition scores
  - iii. dietary records
  - iv. behavioural, enrichment records
  - v. accidents, uncommon events
  - vi. breeding
  - vii. pregnancy and births, if applicable
  - viii. transportation and transfers, if applicable, when they occurred, for what purpose and how done, including permanent transfer to another facility
  - ix. death and final disposal, including disposal of body parts requiring specific attention (tusks, horns)
- c) records should be made available to relevant government authorities, including to the authorities of the country of origin of a specimen, upon request, or as otherwise required by law

## 6. Breeding

**Written policy exists to determine whether or not breeding occurs in the facility, with sound practices in place to properly care for infants born.**

- a) If not breeding: preventive measures and contraception (in consultation with the relevant breeding coordinator and veterinarian)
- b) If breeding: develop a plan in advance, focusing on
  - i. mating
  - ii. pregnancy
  - iii. birth
  - iv. care of young including appropriate setup of enclosures to meet the needs of calves, plans in place for testing for and the treatment of active EEHV (elephant endotheliotropic herpesvirus) infections, should it arise
  - v. population and genetic management
  - vi. physical space requirements
  - vii. participation in a recognised breeding programme

## 7. Wildlife and animal welfare laws

**All relevant international, national and local wildlife and animal welfare conventions, laws and regulations are complied with.**

- a) compliance with national laws and/or regulations
- b) compliance with international commitments
  - i. CITES requirements
  - ii. other (veterinary laws for international transport, etc.)
  - iii. conservation agreements, if applicable

## 8. Other factors

- a) Membership in a recognised Zoo association can provide further reassurance that the destination adheres to the standards and guidelines of that association and helps to exchange males to prevent inbreeding, but it is as such neither a pre-condition for assessment of an appropriate destination, nor a proof that the facility is an appropriate and acceptable destination
- b) long-term policy of the facility of continual improvement to the quality of care and husbandry of the animals it maintains
- c) arrangements should be made to ensure that any subsequent sale, donation or transfer of the animal (internationally or domestically) or of any animal born in the facility is also only to a facility suitably equipped to house and care for the specimen
- d) support to *in situ* conservation

## Section B - Examples of best practice documents for keeping living specimens of African elephant and southern white rhinoceros

### Guidelines on keeping African elephants and southern white rhinoceros

EAZA. 2018. EAZA Best Practice Guidelines for the white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum*). European Association of Zoos and Aquaria.

<https://www.eaza.net/assets/Uploads/CCC/2018-EAZA-Best-Practice-Guidelines-White-rhinoceros-Approved.pdf>

EAZA. 2020. EAZA Best Practice Guidelines for Elephants. European Association of Zoos and Aquaria.

<https://www.eaza.net/assets/Uploads/CCC/BPG-2020/Elephant-TAG-BPG-2020.pdf>

BIAZA (British & Irish Association of Zoos & Aquariums Elephant Welfare Group): BIAZA (2019) Guidelines for the management of elephants within BIAZA zoos. These are available on request via the BIAZA office ([admin@biaza.org.uk](mailto:admin@biaza.org.uk)).

Elephant Husbandry Resource Guide – International Elephant Foundation

<https://elephantconservation.org/ieflimages/2015/06/CompleteHusbandryGuide1stEdition.pdf>

Rhino Husbandry Manual – International Rhino Foundation

<https://rhinos.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/rhino-husbandry-manual.compressed.pdf>

AZA Standards for Elephant Management and Care (2011, rev. 2012) AZA TAG/SSP steering committee

[https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2332/aza\\_standards\\_for\\_elephant\\_management\\_and\\_care.pdf](https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2332/aza_standards_for_elephant_management_and_care.pdf)

GFAS. Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries Standards for Elephant Sanctuaries.

<https://www.sanctuaryfederation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/ElephantStandard2019.pdf>

GFAS. Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries Standards For Rhinoceros, Hippopotamus and Tapir Sanctuaries

<https://www.sanctuaryfederation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Rhino-Hippo-Tapir-Standards-2019.pdf>

Kane, L; Forthman D & Hancock D eds (2005) Optimal Conditions for Captive Elephants: A Report by the Coalition for Captive Elephant Well-Being

<http://elephantcare.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Optimal-Conditions-for-Captive-Elephants-2005.pdf>

Kane, L; Forthman D & Hancock D eds (2005) Best Practices by the Coalition for Captive Elephant Well-Being

<http://elephantcare.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Best-Practices-Coalition-for-Captive-Elephants-Well-Being-2005.pdf>

Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice - Appendix 8 – Specialist exhibits, Elephants - June 2017

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/654713/zoo-practice-elephants.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/654713/zoo-practice-elephants.pdf)

### Other relevant documents

Guidance for appropriate and acceptable destinations: African elephants and southern white rhinoceros

[https://cites.org/sites/default/files/common/imp/San\\_Diego\\_Zoo\\_Global\\_response\\_to\\_Notification%202020-070.pdf](https://cites.org/sites/default/files/common/imp/San_Diego_Zoo_Global_response_to_Notification%202020-070.pdf)

IUCN. 2014. IUCN guidelines on the use of *ex situ* management for species conservation. IUCN SSC,

<https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2014-064.pdf>

Caring for wildlife – The world zoo and aquarium animal welfare strategy (WAZA)

<https://www.waza.org/priorities/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-strategies/>

WAZA code of ethics and animal welfare

<https://www.waza.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/WAZA-Code-of-Ethics.pdf>

EAZA Standards on the Accommodation and Care, EAZA Population Management Manual and EAZA Code of Ethics here: <https://www.eaza.net/about-us/eazadocuments/>

EAZA animal welfare resources <https://www.eaza.net/about-us/areas-of-activity/animal-welfare/>

Wild Welfare's "Core Fundamentals in Animal Welfare" <https://wildwelfare.org/wp-content/uploads/Core-Fundamental-Standard-of-Practice-for-Captive-Wild-Animals-Oct2020.pdf>

CITES Website which is regularly updated contains further guidance documents: [https://cites.org/eng/imp/appropriate\\_and\\_acceptable\\_destinations](https://cites.org/eng/imp/appropriate_and_acceptable_destinations)



DRAFT DECISIONS ON THE DEFINITION OF  
THE TERM 'APPROPRIATE AND ACCEPTABLE DESTINATIONS'

**19.AA Directed to the Secretariat**

The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a Notification within 90 days of the close of the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, inviting feedback on experience with using the guidance contained in Notification to the Parties No. 2019/070 on *Non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen is suitably equipped to house and care for it*, as well as the information provided on the CITES webpage "Appropriate and acceptable destinations", and
- b) report on this feedback to the Animals Committee and the Standing Committee for their consideration and recommendations, as appropriate.

**19.BB Directed to the Animals Committee**

The Animals Committee shall review the report from the Secretariat on feedback from Parties called for in Decision 19.AA and make recommendations, as appropriate, for consideration by the Standing Committee.

**19.CC Directed to the Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee shall review the report from the Secretariat and any comments and recommendations coming from the Animals Committee on feedback from Parties called for in Decision 19.AA and make recommendations, as appropriate, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.

TENTATIVE BUDGET AND SOURCE OF FUNDING  
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS OR DECISIONS

According to Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Submission of draft resolutions, draft decisions and other documents for meetings of the Conference of the Parties*, the Conference of the Parties decided that any draft resolutions or decisions submitted for consideration at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties that have budgetary and workload implications for the Secretariat or permanent committees must contain or be accompanied by a budget for the work involved and an indication of the source of funding. The Secretariat proposes the following tentative budget and source of funding.

The proposed decisions have workload implications for the Animals and Standing Committees, but there are no budgetary implications.