

Zoos FIGHTING extinction & Zoos FACILITATING extinction

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What do we mean by **zoos facilitating extinction**?

Bad zoos and their ways actually contribute to the extinction or at least the wastage of wildlife. They do so through

- Poor animal welfare, inadequate veterinary care, inadequate and poor nutrition leads to high death rates
- Poor to zero population management leads to unscrupulous disposition of surplus
- Uncontrolled visitor behavior – plastic bags, inappropriate food, teasing, throwing rocks, deliberately giving toxic items (cigarettes, plastic items), etc.
- Inappropriate and dangerous animal shows stressing animals and putting public at risk
- Wrong messages generating incorrect image of zoos generally
- Dependence on animal dealers, trappers or others including wild catch
- Wild catch leads to depletion of wildlife and disturbed habitats
- Etc.

These actions not only hurt animals. Bad zoos with all their careless, corrupt and cunning ways give all zoos a bad name. Bad zoos give ALL zoos a bad name.

Although nobody really knows the exact number of zoos, estimates range from 8,000-15,000 or (more reasonably) 9,000 zoos globally. There are about 1000 **recognized** or otherwise respectable zoos and about 9,000 **other** zoos. **Other zoos** is a term which refers to substandard zoos that are not associated with any recognized zoo association. Within the 1000 **recognized** zoos there are a few hundred that would not pass the **good zoo** test. They are included in the good zoo list because they are linked with countries that have zoo associations, and therefore listed, but are not necessarily up to good zoo standards. Because they are linked with zoo associations, however, there are chances they will improve.

If we do not act on this problem ... consider what is at stake

1. the welfare of the animals **suffering and dying** in dysfunctional zoos
2. the welfare of the animals that **will be caught** to replace those that die in dysfunctional zoos and the
3. obvious conservation issues accompanying the scenario of dysfunctional zoos holding threatened species.

WAZA, their members and other organisations have tried to improve bad zoos but the rate of improvement is too slow, too costly, too time-consuming and too unpredictable. Zoos, whether public, private, governmental, or non-governmental, should be regulated by government. Government itself knows little about zoo management so good zoos should provide help to governments of countries without zoo legislation and with a significant number of dysfunctional zoos.

Benefits of Zoo Legislation

- Zoo legislation can bring significant benefits to large numbers of powerless animals in dysfunctional zoo.
- Zoo legislation can be written to cover all the zoos in a country including the vague **Animal facilities**,

rescue centers, roadside zoos, animal shows, as well as zoos can be covered.

- Working to establish zoo legislation in a country can result in improvements to all the zoos of that country for the same investment of time, money and energy as one or two.
- Promoting and assisting local authorities with zoo legislation should be seriously considered as a project by zoos that have a presence in developing countries.

Other considerations

We are targeting countries that

- need zoo legislation but do not have it . . . but there are other considerations, e.g.,
- countries that have it but do not implement it and
- countries that have useless zoo legislation . . .

Countries that have successful zoo legislation, such as Great Britain, Australia, India, etc., can provide their legislation and experience as models and people to advise.

Approaching government agencies

There are many ways to approach government agencies. Many will be grateful for your interest, as they might have been facing difficult criticism.

Zoo personnel conducting *in situ* projects in countries with needy zoos would be very effective. Visiting zoo personnel can approach the relevant government agencies and get a hearing ... build a relationship.

Zoo specialists are not viewed as a threat ... they are welcomed as colleagues unlike fanatical animal rights or animal welfare advocates. A zoo specialist can introduce the idea of zoo legislation and provide successful examples. They can plant a seed.

Working with government is **not that difficult**

And remember what is at stake if you don't act ...

- ☒ The welfare of animals **suffering and dying** in dysfunctional zoos
- ☒ The welfare of animals that **will be caught** to replace those that die
- ☒ The conservation issues with dysfunctional zoos holding threatened species.

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